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BRS worker dies by suicide over harassment by Congress leader Baba Fasiuddin

Hyderabad: A BRS worker died by suicide allegedly due to the harassment of former Deputy Mayor and Congress leader Baba Fasiuddin who demanded money for allowing building construction activity. Mohd Sardar, (50) a resident of Borabanda stayed with his family. A few months ago, he had constructed a house and it was demolished by the GHMC for certain violations. On Wednesday night, Sardar went to the terrace of a building and jumped from there on the ground. He sustained injuries and died on the spot. YVS Sudheendra, Task Force, DCP said Sardar had climbed on to the building and jumped from there. "The family members have raised certain allegations. Based on the complaint, we will register a case and take up investigation," said the official.

PM Modi says Operation Sindoor befitting reply to those who unleashed terror in India



GNS News Agency, May 29

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday (May 29, 2025) said Operation Sindoor was a befitting reply to those who unleashed terror in India, asserting that the country was united in the fight against terrorism. Addressing the 50th anniversary of Sikkim's statehood function, Mr. Modi said the Himalayan state is the "pride of the nation" and its people believe in

democracy. LIVE: 'Our government has brought the North East to the centre of development,' says PM Modi on Sikkim Statehood day "Operation Sindoor against terrorists in the wake of the Pahalgam attack last month was a befitting reply to those who unleashed terror in India. What terrorists did in Pahalgam was an attack on humanity, and we are now united in the fight against terrorism," the PM said virtually. Modi's proposed visit to Gangtok to attend the golden jubilee celebrations of Sikkim's statehood was cancelled because of inclement weather conditions.

He addressed the gathering at Paljor Stadium here virtually from Bagdogra in West Bengal. "I wanted to be part of Sikkim's statehood event in Gangtok, but weather played spoilsport," he said. The Prime Minister said the NDA government was dedicated to making India a sports superpower. "We want Northeast, including Sikkim, to move in this direction. Sikkim has the potential to become a hub of adventure sports," he added. The Prime Minister said Sikkim was increasing organic exports, which was a big achievement for the state. He added that connectivity was the main focus of the Centre, and the Sevoke-Rangpo project will link the Himalayan state with the country's rail network.

E-rupee in circulation grows to Rs 1,000 crore

GNS News Agency, May 29

Mumbai: The value of central bank digital currency (CBDC) or e-rupee in circulation jumped to Rs 1,016 crore at the end of March 2025 from Rs 234 crore in the year-ago period, the Reserve Bank said on Thursday. The RBI is exploring the commencement of CBDC pilots on cross-border payments, it said in the annual report without giving a timeline. The CBDC was first introduced in November 2022 initially with a wholesale pilot, which was followed up with a retail one as well. Simplifying cross-border payments was one of the stated advantages of the CBDC, which had to be introduced in face of the challenge to the currency system from non-fiat virtual currencies like bitcoins. "...the Reserve Bank is exploring commencement of CBDC pilots on cross-border payments both on bilateral and multilateral basis to overcome key challenges related to turnaround time, efficiency and transparency," it said.

Bilateral cross-border CBDC pilots with select countries are being "actively explored", and progress has been made in finalisation of roadmap, technical aspects and use cases, the report said. The Reserve Bank's participation in multilateral CBDC initiatives, particularly under the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) Innovation Hub, is also being considered, as per the report. The central bank also aims to further expand the scope and coverage of ongoing pilots in e-rupee-Retail and e-rupee-Wholesale by introducing new use cases and features and also improve the technological aspects of the account aggregator framework to enhance transparency, customer convenience and efficiency, it said. A bulk of Rs 857 crore of the e-rupee in circulation is in Rs 500 denomination, the annual report said, adding Rs 200 (Rs 91 crore in circulation) and Rs 100 (Rs 38 crore in circulation) denominations also have sizeable presence.

Starting with the initial use cases of person-to-person



(P2P) and person-to-merchant (P2M), the Reserve Bank expanded the central bank digital currency (CBDC)-Retail (e-rupee-R) pilot to include offline and programmability features in FY25, the annual report said. As at end-March 2025, the e-rupee retail pilot was expanded to 17 banks and 60 lakh users. To further enhance adoption and improve distribution, certain non-banks have been allowed to offer CBDC wallets. Moreover, the scope of e-rupee-Wholesale was further expanded and diversified with the addition of four standalone primary dealers (SPDs), it said. Programmability use cases include direct benefit transfers to farmers against generation of carbon credits and loans to tenant farmers under Kisan Credit Card (KCC) in select locations, it noted, adding that employee allowances for fuel/meal purposes are also being implemented by banks. Odisha has made e-rupee payments to 88,000 beneficiaries under the Subhadra Yojana, the annual report said, adding discussions are underway with multiple central government ministries and state governments for leveraging programmability feature of CBDC to transfer funds to beneficiaries with a defined end use.

Election Commission takes 21 initiatives in 100 days to streamline poll management



GNS News Agency, May 29

"In a bid to enhance voter experience and streamline poll management, the Election Commission of India (EC) has launched 21 new initiatives over the past 100 days," officials said on Thursday. These measures, they pointed out, span procedural reforms, training programmes and stakeholder engagement. "The measures have marked the first 100 days of the 26th Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar," they noted. To improve voter access, the poll authority has revised the maximum number of electors per polling station from 1,500 to 1,200. Additional polling booths will be set up in densely populated areas such as gated communities and high-rise buildings. The Commission, they said, aims to ensure that no voter is required to travel more than 2 km to cast their vote. Voter information slips have been re-designed for clarity on the polling station number. As a significant boost to the convenience of voters, a mobile phone deposit facility will be set up at the entrance of every polling station. Booths set up by candidates will now be permitted just beyond 100 metres from the entrance of the polling station gate, as opposed to 200 metres from the polling station premises. To facilitate a simpler user interface, a single-point new integrated dashboard, ECINET, has been developed with the aim of providing all services for all stakeholders at a single point instead of the existing 40-plus applications. The poll panel has also initiated direct integration of death registration data

from the Registrar General of India to enable timely and verified removal of deceased electors from the rolls. "A special summary revision has been held ahead of a by-election as prescribed in the law. This is the first such exercise to be conducted ahead of a by-election in decades," the officials said. In a move to institutionalise regular interaction with political stakeholders, the EC facilitated 4,719 meetings across the country with participation from more than 28,000 political party representatives. The Commission has also held consultations here with leaders of recognised political parties, including the AAP, the BJP, the BSP, the CPI(M), and the NPP, with more meetings with the national political parties and State political parties planned after the current bypolls. A comprehensive training framework has been developed for 28 categories of stakeholders identified across the electoral process. These modules are based on provisions of the Representation of the People Acts, 1950 and 1951; the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960; and the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, along with EC's instructions. Among other reforms, the EC has implemented biometric attendance at its headquarters, activated the E-Office system, and held regular CEO-level review meetings. These measures are intended to improve internal coordination and operational efficiency.

Boy dies on the spot after coming under wheels of tractor driven by father in Telangana's Siddipet

GNS News Agency, May 29

Siddipet: In a tragic incident, a boy died after coming under the wheels of a tractor that his father was driving to till the land at Alwal village in Miuroddi mandal here on Thursday. Beeda Nikas (8), son of Kanakaiah and Lavanya, was sitting on the bund and watching his father till the land with a rotavator. He fell off the bund and came under the wheels. Death was instant for him.

Financial difficulties force auto driver to end life in Telangana's Kothagudem

Kothagudem: An auto-rickshaw driver died, allegedly by suicide, in Yellandu town here.

Durga Prasad, a resident of 14-number Basthi in the town, reportedly mixed pesticide in a cool drink on Tuesday night and died during the early hours of Wednesday. He was said to have taken the extreme step due to financial difficulties and mounting debts as he could not earn enough money because of the free travel facility for women in RTC buses. Auto-rickshaw drivers wearing black badges took out a protest rally from Yellandu Government Hospital along with his body. Auto-rickshaw union leader Mallesh said that auto drivers were ending lives due to debts since free travel in RTC buses was introduced by the Congress government.



GNS News Agency, May 29

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday slammed the Mamata Banerjee government in West Bengal and said the state "needs freedom from politics of violence, appeasement, riots and corruption", adding that its citizens are eagerly awaiting "BJP's development model". "First is the crisis of violence and anarchy spreading in society. Secondly, our mothers and sisters are unsafe and subjected to heinous crimes. Thirdly, extreme despair and rampant unemployment among the youth. Fourthly, there is a steady decline in trust in the system. Finally, the selfish politics of the ruling party has snatched the rights of the poor," Modi said. The Prime Minister said the youth of Bengal and poor families are the worst hit due to "rampant corruption" in the TMC-ruled state, and that the education system of West Bengal is also being ruined. "We saw in the teacher recruitment scam how cor-

ruption ruins everything. The TMC government in their tenure destroyed the future and families of thousands of teachers and left their children helpless. The whole education system of West Bengal is being ruined.

The absence of teachers has put the futures of lakhs of students at risk. The TMC leaders have committed such a huge sin. The limit is that even today these people are not ready to accept their mistakes. Instead, they blame the courts," the PM said. Modi also came down heavily on the TMC government over the violence in Murshidabad and Malda. "Whatever happened in Murshidabad and Malda was an example of the state government's ruthlessness here... In the name of appeasement, hooliganism was given a free hand. Imagine the horrific situation when the people of a party running the government identify and burn people's houses, and the police act as mere spectators. I ask the poor people of Bengal, is this how a government runs? Here, the court has to intervene on every issue. Otherwise, nothing will be resolved. The people of Bengal do not trust the TMC government anymore," he said. Prime Minister Modi also said that Operation Sindoor, launched against Pakistan in the wake of the Pahalgam attack earlier this month, was a befitting reply to those who unleashed terror on India. "What terrorists did in Pahalgam wasn't just an attack on India but on humanity and brotherhood. The terrorist snatched away the happiness of many families in India. They also conspired to divide India. But the whole world is seeing how India is more united than ever... We unitedly gave the terrorists a fitting reply through Operation Sindoor," Modi said. He further said, "India is now more united than ever. Frustrated after the destruction of terrorists' dens, Pakistan tried to attack civilians and army in India."

Two 'hybrid militants' of LeT apprehended in south Kashmir's Poonch

GNS News Agency, May 29

Security forces have apprehended two "hybrid militants" of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in Jammu and Kashmir's Shopian district, officials said on Thursday (May 29, 2025). The officials said it was a "major operational success". "Hybrid militants" are those who are not listed as ultras but are radicalised enough to carry out a terror strike and then slip back into routine life. Giving details of the operation, the officials said security forces launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) on Wednesday night in the Baskuchan area of Poonch following specific input. "The area was effectively cordoned and the movement of terrorists was observed in a nearby orchard. Swift and strategic action by the forces led to the successful surrender of two LeT hybrid terrorists, averting a potential encounter," they said. The two were identified as Irfan Bashir and Uzair Salam, they added. Two AK-56 rifles, four magazines, 102 rounds,



two hand grenades, two pouches, 5,400 in cash, a mobile phone, a smartwatch and an Aadhaar card were recovered from their possession. A case has been registered and an investigation has been launched, the officials said.

Chandrababu Naidu thanks PM Modi for approving four-lane Badvel-Nellore Corridor project



GNS News Agency, May 29

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister Nitin Gadkari for approving the Badvel-Nellore Corridor project. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by PM Modi has approved the construction of a 4-Lane Badvel-Nellore Corridor with a

length of over 109 km at a cost of Rs 3,653 crore in the southern State on National Highway (NH) 67. It is on Design-Build-Finance-Operate-Transfer (DBFOT) Mode, said a PIB release.

"The approval of the 4-lane Badvel-Nellore Corridor by the Union Cabinet is a major step forward in our state's growth," said Naidu in a post on 'X', expressing gratitude for the Centre's support in fast-tracking vital infrastructure. Naidu on Wednesday said that the four-lane corridor would boost regional connectivity and significantly contribute to state's economic growth, infrastructure development, and youth empowerment across multiple districts and rural belts. PM Modi, in a post on 'X' said: "The 4-Lane Badvel-Nellore Corridor, whose construction has been approved by the Cabinet will benefit the development journey of Andhra Pradesh and generate several opportunities for the youth of the State." The proposed corridor will reduce the travel distance to Krishanapatnam port by 34 km from 142 km to 108 km as compared to the existing Badvel-Nellore road, the release said.

BRS slams Telangana Congress government over caste discrimination in Gurukuls

GNS News Agency, May 29

Hyderabad: BRS leader and retired IPS officer RS Praveen Kumar launched a scathing attack on the Congress government for allegedly promoting caste discrimination in social welfare hostels. He lashed out at IAS officer Alugu Varshini for her reported remarks suggesting that students from poor families should clean toilets and cook their meals in hostels, claiming it would "build good habits".

Condemning her comments, he said no officer would make such derogatory and irresponsible statement without the Chief Minister's backing. "Revanth Reddy garu, your officer is openly saying Dalit children should clean toilets because they don't come from rich families. If this is such a noble reform, implement it in corporate schools where your children go," he said. Praveen Kumar went on to target the Congress leadership, stating that if such actions were about dignity and self-reliance, the Chief Minister, Ministers and the officials in the government should start washing their



own toilets. "Share those videos with the people of Telangana," he challenged. He also appealed to the house-keeping staff to boycott the residences of the Chief Minister, Ministers and officials to mark their protest.

Indian Chronicle

English Daily

Despite rumbles, Congress govt seems irreplaceable in Karnataka

Karnataka may have been devastated by the torrential rains, sweeping across south-west India, heralding an early monsoon season this year. Bengaluru, already over stretched as far as its inadequate civic amenities and traffic problems are concerned, had a torrid time all through last week. Quite naturally, it was the hapless public who endured the terrible times and an endless stream of assurances from the government, which seemed convinced that they were actually doing their jobs much better than ever. Completing two years of its tenure, the Congress government last week decided to celebrate it on a grand note. With the Delhi bosses and the party spearhead Rahul Gandhi in attendance, the Siddaramaiah-led cabinet listed out its series of achievements, which were mostly about the five guarantees that they started implementing over this period. The sixth guarantee, handing of ownership rights to the people of the State was initiated by Rahul who said that 'whoever owns land in Karnataka must have ownership rights'. It surely does not mean that the remaining three years are going to be smooth sailing for the present government. Dissidence and groupism, as old as the hills, continue to plague the administration as the respective Deputy Chief Minister, D K Shivakumar has moved enough to rename the neighbouring districts of Bengaluru as Bengaluru South, which includes his constituency. If this is being panned as 'land mafia' friendly by the BJP, which despite maintaining a high pressure and street-level activism against the doings of the government, is still far from being considered as a cohesive unit capable of taking on the ruling party. The saffron party's machinery at the state level is forced to grapple with disgruntled old-timers and the defectors, who joined it after its 'Operation Kamala' a few years ago.

Hyderabad's James Street Police Station, built in 1870s, revitalised for future



GNS News Agency, May 29

Hyderabad Mir Khan, who carried out the restoration work, said that several layers of foreign material were carefully removed and redone with ancient lime plaster techniques, as part of the restoration.

Nearly a decade after the Hyderabad police vacated the premises, the iconic 19th-century James Street Police Station, later known as Ramgopalpet Police Station, has been revitalised through conservation efforts. This Palladian structure, built in the 1870s, with its distinctive colonial features including semicircular arches, louvred windows, doors, and a prominent clock tower, has been given a new lease of life. The police station was originally named after British Resident James Kirkpatrick and later renamed after businessman Seth Ramgopal, who financed its construction. In 1998, the fully functional police station was designated as a heritage building under the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority. Over time, this grand structure succumbed to the elements. Leaking roofs and broken rafters became common, clear signs of deterioration due to the passage of time and nature's relentless touch.

Conservation architect GSV Suryanarayan Murthy of Kshetra Consultants said his team studied the original geometry, architectural features, and material used, along with archival research, to restore the building. Asked about the condition of the building at the start of the conservation project, he said that the structure was intact, though portions of the roof at the back had cracked. "People had added a water tank, damaging the brackets and parapet, and the roof portion. We removed it and tried to load the water tank appropriately so that it does not further damage the structure in the future," he added. According to him, the "Madras terrace" and "jack-arch roof" are unique to the era's buildings. "There are no people who know the know-how of this kind of roof. So, we studied the previous specifications from old documents, trained people, tested at some place, did trial and error, and we continued only after finding them appropriate," he said, adding that the famed British Residency and iconic Kurshid Jah Devdi are examples of similar architecture to be found in Hyderabad.

Mir Khan of Deccan Terrain Heritage, who carried out the restoration work, said that several layers of foreign material, such as cement and synthetic paints, were carefully removed and redone with ancient lime plaster techniques, as part of the restoration. "The ornamental lime plaster over typical colonial brick masonry is one of a kind in clock tower design, signifying the era of brick and lime mastery, where curved steps and grooves on the outer walls distinguish it from general lime buildings' ornamentation," he said. According to Khan, wooden rafters, due to constant moisture, were damaged, and wherever required, propping was done and replaced. "Due to ageing and interventions, the building, like any heritage building, required detailed analysis before taking up restoration. We have to retain the breathability in the walls. So, for aeration, we have to have lime plaster on both sides. Terrace leakages are common in any heritage building. However, if you don't attend to them in time, the water penetrates the building and becomes a problem."

How Canon's Comprehensive Office Automation Solutions Helped Solve the Digital Dilemma in the Real Estate Industry



Hyderabad: In today's fast-paced business landscape, where agility and digital readiness are paramount, Canon India - a leader in digital imaging and document management solutions has empowered the Ambuja Neotia Group, a prominent conglomerate headquartered in Kolkata with a diverse presence across real estate, hospitality, healthcare, and education, to overcome a key operational hurdle: dependence on paper-based documentation. Task at Hand: To Make Document Management More Efficient. Over the past decade, the real estate sector in India, like many traditional industries, relied extensively on physical documentation. Ambuja Neotia Group also operated within this framework. Some of the key factors that were commonly encountered

during this period included: Manual handling of large volumes of documents across projects and departments. Locating and retrieving key records such as project files, invoices, agreements, and communications was time and resource intensive. Storage constraints due to the physical space required for document archives. Concerns around the security and management of sensitive legal and financial information. Role of Canon in transformation

Recognizing the need to digitally transform their documentation workflows post pandemic, Ambuja Neotia Group turned to Canon India for a reliable, scalable, and future-ready solution. To increase their efficiency in document management, Canon India implemented an integrated solution for Ambuja Neotia Group, combining reliable hardware with intelligent software. "In today's accelerated adoption to digital processes, the transition from physical to digital documentation continues to present challenges for many organizations. At Canon, our focus has been on empowering businesses to enhance their productivity through cutting-edge imaging and document management solutions. We are pleased to collaborate with the Ambuja Neotia Group on their digital transformation journey, bringing the power of Canon's innovative technology to streamline operations and drive efficiency. Our solutions are thoughtfully designed to meet the evolving needs of modern business infrastructure," shared Mr. Toshiaki Nomura, President & CEO, Canon India.

"Formation of Telangana State Brought Immense Joy" — Social Activist Bejjanki Digambar

“PS Ashokan” Indian Chronicle “Manthani May, 29” Social activist Bejjanki Digambar, who played a crucial role in both the initial and later phases of the Telangana movement, was widely praised for his dedicated services. During the peak of the agitation, he brought together various student unions under a single platform, leading from the front in the struggle for statehood. “On Wednesday, a felicitation ceremony was organized to honor the heroes of the Telangana movement. The Telangana Activists’ Forum hosted the event at the Peddapalli district headquarters, where Digambar, originally from Manthani, was grandly felicitated for his role as both a student leader and activist who relentlessly fought for a separate Telangana.” Speaking on the occasion, Digambar said, “The formation of a separate Telangana state was the only rightful path to rectify the long-standing injustices and losses suffered in the united Andhra Pradesh.” He highlighted that they had waged a tireless battle for statehood. Referring to the Sakala Janula Samme (general strike by all sections of society), he said it was a defining moment that pressured the then Central Government to initiate the formation of Telangana.



India Asserts Its Might Through Operation Sindoor — Chandruptla Sunil Reddy, Former BJP President, Peddapalli District



Ps Ashokan” Indian Chronicle “Manthani May, 29” Chandruptla Sunil Reddy, former BJP President of Peddapalli district, participated in the Tiranga Yatra held in Manthani town. Addressing the gathering, he stated that India has emphatically showcased its military strength through the successful execution of Operation Sindoor. He hailed the valor of Indian soldiers, who, with their resolute and heroic efforts, struck a decisive blow to Pakistani terror outfits, thereby elevating India's prestige on the global stage. “He remarked that the Tiranga Yatra was organized in the Manthani Assembly constituency to celebrate the triumph of these fearless warriors. It was heartening, he said, to witness the enthusiastic participation of patriots and supporters of Operation Sindoor, cutting across political and religious lines, making the event a resounding success.” Referring to the Pahalgam terror attack, Sunil Reddy said that Operation Sindoor served as a powerful

and strategic retaliation. It sent a clear and stern message to hostile nations that India would not tolerate aggression. He emphasized that India, under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, had not only dried up the Indus waters flowing into Pakistan but also obliterated terrorist camps across the border, eliminating hundreds of militants. He asserted that Modi's bold stance has instilled fear in the hearts of enemies, deterring them from even casting an evil eye towards India. “Several senior BJP leaders including Challa Narayana Reddy, Kondapaka Satya Prakash, Bogoiju Srinivas, Malka Mohan Rao, Potharaveni Kranthi Kumar, Sabbani Santosh, Viraveni Rajender, Koyyada Satish, Maram Srinivas Reddy, Medipalli Poorna Chander, Page Ranjith, Ramshetty Manoj, Kondru Lakshman, Prabhakar, Kotha Srinivas, Thotla Raju, and Raviteja also took part in the rally, marking their solidarity with the nation and its armed forces.

Chargesheet filed in Tangra triple murder case, minor son ‘provided key testimony’

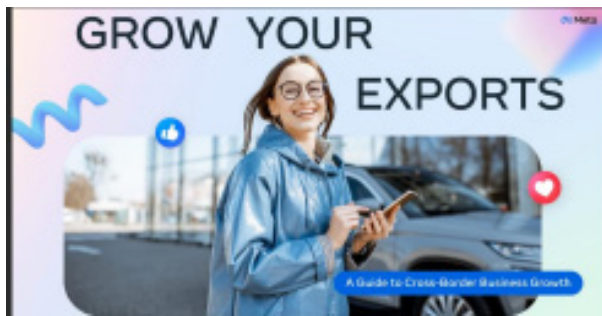
GNS News Agency, May 29

Tangra triple murder case According to sources, police are relying heavily on the testimony of Pranay's minor son, who was in the car when the brothers allegedly crashed into a pillar near Abhishikta More on Kolkata's EM Bypass on February 19. The Kolkata Police have filed a chargesheet against two brothers, Prasun Dey and Pranay Dey, in connection with the February triple murder of three female members of their family. According to sources, police are relying heavily on the testimony of Pranay's minor son, who was in the car when the brothers allegedly crashed into a pillar near Abhishikta More on Kolkata's EM Bypass on February 19. The chargesheet, submitted Thursday, invokes sections 103(1) (murder) and 109(1) (attempt to murder) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and comes months after a car crash culminated in the discovery of three bodies in a multi-storeyed apartment building. According to police sources, the chargesheet shows that investigators have relied heavily on the testimony of Pranay's minor son - while still undergoing treatment at a local hospital, the boy allegedly



edly gave a detailed statement about an "attempted strangulation and a wrist injury", which the police are using as a key piece of evidence, officials said. After the car crash on February 19, Pranay allegedly made a startling confession: that the brothers had intentionally crashed the car and that three others - his wife Romi Dey, Prasun's wife Sudeshna and his minor daughter - had died by suicide at their home in Tangra.

Helping Indian Brands Grow Their Cross Border Business With Meta Ad Tools



Hyderabad: Across the globe, consumers are embracing the freedom to shop from international brands, and this shift is reshaping the online commerce and retail landscape. To explore this trend, we are releasing a playbook, 'Grow Your Exports: A Guide to Cross-Border Business Growth', to provide businesses and advertisers with valuable insights into the evolving habits of cross-border shoppers. The playbook dives into how brands can leverage digital tools, and our platforms, to expand their reach beyond borders.

In a study we commissioned with Kantar titled, 'Consumer Shopping Study', nearly half of the 14,591 surveyed shoppers had made a cross-border purchase in the last six months. Among them, 71% of cross-border shoppers said that they were open to trying new brands that they discovered online. In fact, 72% of shoppers said they would try a new brand if enticed by the right promotion or offer.

Shoppers expect experiences that empower them with information, personalization, and entertaining content. For brands, this presents a big opportunity, but also a new set of imperatives. Today's cross-border shoppers expect a wide selection (61%), personalized experiences (62%), and seamless journeys from discovery to purchase. They are also making more unplanned purchases as shopping becomes more convenient and immersive, with 57% reporting an increase in spontaneous buys. Social validation and connection are key, with many relying on recommendations from friends, family, and influencers.

"At Meta, we believe that cross-border business is a powerful driver of economic growth and opportunity. Our platforms are designed to help businesses of all sizes reach new customers and markets around the world, and grow their presence on the global stage. Our platforms and tools, such as AI, Business Messaging, and Reels, are empowering Indian businesses to seamlessly connect with customers across the globe. By leveraging our solutions, businesses can target the right audience, build trust through personalized customer solutions, and showcase their products in a visually engaging way." — Gaurav Jeet Singh, Director, Agency and VC Partnerships for Meta in India

How can brands leverage digital tools to capture this opportunity?

First, discovery is everything. 40% of shoppers said they follow creators specifically to discover new brands and products from abroad, and more than a third say personalized ads on our platforms have led to new shopping experiences. "Meta is the platform of choice for discovering brands and driving performance. With over \$200M in ad spends from India to global markets for Blink Digital, we've seen firsthand how borderless ambition meets measurable performance. This playbook captures those hard-won insights—some already powering case studies across industries—and invites more brands to test, learn, and scale beyond boundaries." — Rikki Agarwal, Co-Founder, Blink Digital

NSU invites applications for new courses...



“May 29, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema coordinator” The National Sanskrit University, Tirupati, is inviting applications for admission into Certificate Courses, Diploma Courses, and Prak-Shastri Courses in Sanskrit through the Distance Education Department. The last date is 08-06-2025. For more information, contact phone number: Prof C Ranganath DIRECTOR: 9440626562.

Karnataka to impose slab-based cess fee on aggregators

Karnataka During last year's consultations on the draft bill, industry voiced concerns over a uniform fee structure, citing its unsuitability for varied platform business models. The Karnataka labour department is likely to introduce a slab-based structure to collect welfare funds from aggregators to support the Karnataka Gig Workers Social Security and Welfare Fund. According to government officials, the labour department is considering a welfare fee levy of 1-5 per cent based on the payouts made to gig workers and the commission structures of platforms.

The Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Ordinance, 2025, which got its assent from Karnataka Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot on Tuesday, mandates the state government to set the cess percentage for aggregators within six months (November 2025) of the ordinance coming into force. The ordinance extends to aggregators, including Swiggy, Zomato, Amazon, Ola, and Uber, among others.

Dr Manjunath, Additional Labour Commissioner, Karnataka, told The Indian Express, "We are consulting all the platforms and considering their inputs. The draft rules for setting the cess percentage will be finalised by Monday. We will be inviting public and stakeholder feedback before formalising the rule."

The government is studying the financial modalities the aggregators have with gig workers in services like ride sharing, food and grocery delivery, logistics, e-marketplace for wholesale/retail sale of goods and services, healthcare, travel and hospitality, and content and media services.

N.B.A. Accreditation for several courses in SVU Engineering College“



“May 29, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator”“The National Board of Accreditation, under the auspices of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi, has accredited several courses in Sri Venkateswara University Engineering College, an integral part of Sri Venkateswara University. The N.B.A. team inspected the Engineering College at SVU on May 7, 8, and 9, 2025. It visited the departments of Civil, Computer Science, Electronics & Communications, Mechanical, Electronics & Electrical Engineering run by the university. These

five departments have been accredited for three years from 2025 to 2028. . This accreditation was given based on the teaching, student examination results, and infrastructure facilities in the respective departments. In the gazette announced yesterday, it was announced by the N.B.A. SVU Vice Chancellor Acharya Chippada Apparao and Registrar Acharya Bhupathi Naidu expressed their happiness over the recognition. They congratulated the Principal of the College of Engineering Acharya G. Srinivasulu, Coordinator Acharya Venkata Ramaiah, Dean, Acharya Damodar Reddy, Acharya Ramasri and the faculty.

TDP Cadres Flock to Kadapa Mahanadu*“



““May 29, Indian Chronicle Rayalaseema co-ordinator ““The TDP Mahanadu in Kadapa, which has been in full swing for the past two days, concluded today, Thursday, May 29.”“On the final day of the event, approximately *150 TDP supporters* from Tiruchanur Edify School set off for the Kadapa Mahanadu. Their participation was organized under the leadership of *Praneeth Penumadu*, who heads

Edify Schools and founded the Praneeth Foundation.”“Adequate arrangements were made to ensure the supporters had no issues with food and beverages during their travel. The enthusiastic attendees expressed their immense happiness at being able to participate in the Mahanadu, thanks to the support provided by Praneeth Penumadu.

*Grand Birthday Celebrations for Tiruchanur TDP President Kishore Reddy““ •Mark Occasion with Philanthropic Initiatives““



May 29, Indian Chronicle, Rayalaseema co-ordinator”“The birthday of Tiruchanur TDP Village Committee President, Kishore Reddy, was celebrated with grandeur and a spirit of philanthropy by his close friends and party members on Thursday.”“The celebrations com-

menced with a special event at the Navajeevan School for the Blind in Tiruchanur. A large birthday cake was cut, and attendees, including Kishore Reddy, shared it, conveying their heartfelt birthday wishes to him.”“Following the cake cutting, a massive ‘Annadanam’ (food distribution) program was organized. Food was served to the students of the Navajeevan School for the Blind and to the general public at the main gate of the Tourist Bus Stand.”“During the event, well-wishers expressed their profound hopes and prayers for Kishore Reddy. They stated that, by the divine grace and blessings of Lord Venkateswara Swamy, Kishore Reddy should celebrate many more birthdays. They also wished for him to attain higher positions and greater success in his future endeavors, guided by the Lord’s mercy.”“The celebrations witnessed a significant turnout of key TDP leaders from Tiruchanur, enthusiastic supporters, and dedicated party workers, all of whom joined in the joyous occasion.

PM cancels Sikkim visit due to inclement weather, addresses Statehood event virtually

GNS News Agency, May 29

Gangtok: Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s proposed visit to Gangtok to attend the golden jubilee celebrations of Sikkim’s Statehood on Thursday has been cancelled because of inclement weather conditions, officials said. He will, however, attend the programme virtually, they added.The PM was scheduled to release a commemorative coin, souvenir and stamp to mark the completion of 50 years of Sikkim as a State, the officials said.He was also scheduled to inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for several projects.



Confusion reigns in Telangana Congress as Meenakshi Natarajan, Revanth Reddy run parallel administrations

GNS News Agency, May 29

Hyderabad: With AICC Telangana incharge Meenakshi Natarajan and Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy holding parallel meetings with Ministers and senior leaders, the cadre is perplexed over the state of affairs in the party.On Wednesday, Natarajan held meetings with MLAs and senior leaders from erstwhile Adilabad, Karimnagar and Nizamabad districts. Interestingly, the Chief Minister suddenly hosted a dinner meeting for Ministers at his residence. It is learnt that the AICC incharge also attended the meeting.

Both the AICC incharge and the Chief Minister discussed the party affairs, especially measures to be adopted for the ensuing local body elections and others. They are believed to have sought feedback from Ministers and leaders over issues in the party, coordination issues among different leaders and MLAs, and implementation of government schemes, among other matters.However, these simultaneous meetings are leaving leaders and cadre baffled. Already, a section of leaders in the party have expressed their reservations over the Chief Minister convening secret, district-wise meetings with MLAs.It may be recalled that last month, the AICC incharge had held a few meetings with a couple of Ministers, employees and students of the Hyderabad Central University over the Kancha Gachibowli land row. This had not gone down well with the Chief Minister’s camp and there were reports in a section of media, invoking the ‘Telugu pride’ and alleging that the high command was undermining the duly elected Chief Minister.

As speculations are rife over an announcement on the



Cabinet expansion, appointment of the TPCC executive committee and filling of nominated posts, aspirants and senior leaders are keeping their fingers crossed.Setting aside the State leadership’s directions to refrain from issuing public statements, a few aspirants are lobbying hard in New Delhi. In the past, Ibrahimpatnam MLA Malreddy Rangareddy had gone to Delhi to press for his candidature in the Cabinet berth. Chennai MLA Gaddam Vivek Venkat Swamy is using his channels to impress the high command and a few Madiga community MLAs were also likely to meet the AICC leaders in New Delhi on Thursday and make a similar appeal.Meanwhile, a few former Sarpanches, after finding no response to their demands from the State government and the party’s State leadership, directly met Natarajan on Wednesday. Apart from them, party leaders and other sections are also meeting Natarajan and discussing their issues, clearly indicating that trust on the State leadership was eroding.

Unmindful of farmers’ misery, Congress Govt to constitute yet another committee

GNS News Agency, May 29

Hyderabad: The State government is all set to constitute yet another expert committee to study the current status of the Kaleshwaram barrages – Medigadda, Annaram and Sundilla and oversee its rehabilitation works.The new panel will be chaired by former Central Water Commission (CWC) chairman AB Pandya.The slow-paced approach to the rehabilitation of the project has ignited fresh concerns among farmers. With structural damage to the Medigadda barrage first reported in October 2023, the prolonged delays in restoring these critical irrigation structures have left thousands of farmers in Telangana’s northern districts without reliable water supply, threatening their livelihoods for yet another crop season.

The Medigadda barrage, a key component of the ambitious Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project, suffered distress in Block-7, including sinking piers and cracking. The Congress government, terming it non-functional, blamed the previous BRS regime. Similar issues, such as seepage and piping distress, were claimed to have been identified at the Annaram and Sundilla barrages.The National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA), in its April 2025 report, attributed the damage to design, inadequate maintenance, and water storage practices. It recommended demolishing and reconstructing Block-7, after conducting comprehensive geotechnical and structural assessments for all three barrages.However, the government’s slow response has drawn sharp criticism.Farmers in districts like Jayashankar Bhupalpally and Mulugu, who rely on the KLIP for irrigation, are growing increasingly frustrated.“We’ve lost three crop seasons already, and now they’re saying repairs won’t start until November 2025. How are we supposed to survive?” asked Venkatesh Rao, a farmer from Mahabubabad district.The delays have forced many to depend on erratic rainfall or costly borewells, pushing small farmers into debt. The peasant bodies have estimated that over 50,000 farmers have



been affected, with agricultural losses running into crores. The newly constituted committee, tasked with charting a rehabilitation plan, is expected to take months to finalise its recommendations.

Experts warn that the actual repair work, including the demolition and reconstruction of Block-7, could extend beyond 2026, depriving irrigation support for two or more crop seasons.“The process is complex,” said an Irrigation Department official, citing challenges like heavy siltation, logistical constraints, and pending financial clearances for contractors.The implementation agencies such as Larsen & Toubro and Afcons had already contested the observations made by the NDSA on the barrages. The NDSA’s recommendations remain unimplemented as the contractors have raised concerns about inconsistencies in the report, further delaying consensus.The State government’s consultations with the CWC for technical assistance, which remained inconclusive, have further slowed progress.“The government promised us restoration of water supply to our irrigation channels with Kaleshwaram and SRSP stage II, but we’re left with dry fields and empty promises,” complained Sekhar Reddy, in Suryapet district.

Telugu man defrauds San Francisco food delivery firm of \$2.5 million; pleads guilty

GNS News Agency, May 29

Hyderabad: A 30-year-old Telugu-origin man Sayee Chaitanya Reddy Devagiri has pleaded guilty in the federal court of the United States to conspiring to steal more than \$2.5 million from DoorDash, Inc., a San Francisco-based delivery company.Chaitanya Reddy, a resident of Newport Beach, California, and three other defendants were indicted by a federal grand jury in August 2024. He was charged with a single count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and pleaded guilty to that count.Chaitanya Reddy, who was a delivery driver for DoorDash orders, admitted to working with two others in 2020 and 2021 to cause the firm to pay for deliveries that never occurred.

According to the United States Attorney’s Office (Northern District of California), Chaitanya Reddy would place high value orders using customer accounts and manually reassign DoorDash orders to driver accounts and manipulate the delivery company’s software to pay the fraudulent driver accounts for the non-existent deliveries.“Under the scheme, Chaitanya Reddy used customer accounts to place high value orders and then, using an employee’s credentials to gain access to DoorDash software, manually reassigned DoorDash orders to driver accounts that he and others controlled. Chaitanya Reddy then caused the fraudulent driver accounts to report that the orders had been delivered, when they had not, and manipulated DoorDash’s computer systems to prompt DoorDash to pay the fraudulent driver accounts for the non-existent deliveries. Chaitanya Reddy would then use DoorDash software to change the orders from “delivered” status to “in process” status and manually reassign the orders to driver accounts he and others controlled, beginning the process again. This procedure usually took less than five minutes, and was repeated hundreds of times for many of the orders. The scheme resulted in fraudulent payments exceeding \$2.5 million,” according to an official press release.

Acting United States Attorney Patrick D. Robbins and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Special Agent in Charge Sanjay Virmani made the announcement. Chaitanya Reddy is the third defendant to be convicted for his role in this conspiracy. Co-defendant Manaswi Mandadapu pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud on May 6, 2025. Tyler Thomas Bottenhorn, who was separately charged, pleaded guilty on November 7, 2023.Chaitanya Reddy is next scheduled to appear before US District Judge Beth Labson Freeman for a status hearing on September 16. He faces a maximum statutory penalty of 20 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000.Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael G. Pitman is prosecuting the case with the assis-



tance of Sahib Kaur. The prosecution is the result of an investigation by the FBI, the release said.

Rajasthan State government employee held for spying for Pakistan

Jairpur: A Rajasthan State government employee was detained in Jaisalmer on suspicion of espionage for Pakistan, an official said on Thursday. Shakur Khan was detained on Wednesday night by an intelligence department team who were acting on security-related inputs.Khan, who works in the district employment office, was found to have phone numbers associated with Pakistan stored on his device, the official said. “There were inputs about Shakur Khan that he could be involved in spying for Pakistan. He was on surveillance following inputs and was detained last night,” the officer said.

PCMC starts razing 36 structures in Chikhli near River Indrayani for violating environmental laws



GNS News Agency, May 29

The PCMC action took off around 6 am following the Supreme Court's upholding of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) order on May 5. The NGT had in July last year declared 29 structures illegal, ruling that they had been constructed by violating environmental laws. The NGT had also imposed a Rs 5 crore fine on the residents for causing environmental damage. The residents had then approached the Supreme Court, which had first stayed the NGT order but then upheld it on May 5. During the demolition drive against the 29 structures, the PCMC also started razing seven other structures that purportedly violated the green laws. "We have employed two JCBs and 14 poclain machines," said Makrand Nikam, City Engineer, PCMC, who supervised the demolition action. A strong posse of the Pimpri-Chinchwad police ensured security for the civic team.

Nikam said there was little resistance from the residents when the drive started in the morning. "As most of the residents had moved out with their bags and baggage by late yesterday (Friday) evening, there was little resistance to the drive. Nobody tried to stop the drive," he added. Asked why the PCMC did not stop the construction activity when the structures were being built, Nikam said, "We had twice served notices to the residents telling them that they cannot construct the structures without authorised civic permission. The first notice was served when they had just started constructing the structures. Even later, we had served another notice. But they did not stop their construction activity." When asked what action PCMC will take against other such structures constructed within the flood line, Nikam replied, "I will have to carry out a survey... I won't be able to tell the exact figure now." Shekhar Singh, Municipal Commissioner, who also arrived at the spot around 10.30 am, said the PCMC has taken action as per the directions of the Supreme Court. "We will also initiate the process to recover Rs 5 crore cost from the residents as per the apex court order," he added. Asked why the

PCMC could not wait till the monsoon got over, the commissioner said, "We had to take the action now as during monsoon we cannot raze structures."

The PCMC chief emphasised that they had not misinterpreted the Supreme Court order as alleged by some local residents. "The SC has reproduced the NGT order. The NGT had given six months to PCMC to demolish the structures. Since the residents had appealed in the Supreme Court, we were waiting for the final order..." he said. Urging the residents to cross-check with PCMC and other government departments before purchasing a plot or a house, the commissioner said, "I appeal to the residents to cross-check... whether the civic body has given building permission or not, whether the layout is approved or not... Only after they have cross-checked thoroughly, the residents should go ahead with the deal." Asked what action the PCMC will take against those civic officials who allegedly demanded a bribe from residents to allow them to carry on with their illegal construction activity, Singh said, "If this has happened as alleged by the residents, then it is illegal and a criminal act. The residents should come forward and complain against them. They should tell us the names of the officials. We will file an FIR against them and get them arrested." The commissioner said he was also pained to take the action. "However, it is also a warning to other residents to remain extra alert and not indulge in such illegal purchases," he said. Mahesh Patil, one of the residents who led the fight of the River Valley Society residents, broke down as he watched his house being demolished. "I had invested upwards of Rs 1 crore in purchasing the plot of land and in constructing the house. I had taken a loan and invested all my savings... I thought I got my dream house. But today it fell to the ground. Everything has turned into dust," he said. Patil said they tried desperately to get the PCMC to postpone its action due to the impending monsoon. "We met several MLAs and MPs. We met PCMC officials, but none of them helped us. We wanted to explore one last option of a curative petition in the Supreme Court. But that also did not happen," he said. Asif Shaikh, another aggrieved resident, said, "My family invested all our savings into purchasing the plot and constructing the house. We were misled into purchasing the house by the developer and the builder. They had put up boards, saying the plot of land was in the Residential zone, and, therefore, all of us purchased it and got trapped in this shady deal." Shaikh said he was a Muslim and was now finding it difficult to get even a rented accommodation. "We had earlier faced problems in finding a flat, as societies don't want Muslims. We thought we would have our separate bungalow. Even that has now turned to dust. We tried to look for a rented flat, but no one is giving us a rented flat as we are Muslims," he said.

How Kolkata improved its air quality within 6 years

GNS News Agency, May 29

Over a span of six years, Kolkata has demonstrated a remarkable turnaround in its air quality, transforming from one of the most polluted cities in the country in 2019 to being nationally recognised for its improved environmental standards in 2025. This progress has earned the city the third-highest performance-based incentive from the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change. In 2019, Kolkata was listed among the Top 10 most polluted cities by the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP). At the time, the city's annual average PM10 level was recorded at 100 micrograms per cubic meter. Additionally, the annual average AQI at the Fort William green zone automated air monitoring station reached 343 in 2019 – categorised as 'very poor'. In contrast, in May 2025, the PM10 level ranges between 47 and 50 micrograms per cubic meter, and the AQI snds at a significantly improved 73.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, in a post on her X handle, congratulated the citizens and agencies of Kolkata for their collective efforts. "Kolkata again shows the way! Grateful to the people of Kolkata for their support. Let's all – citizens and agencies alike – keep up the effort for a cleaner, greener city!" she wrote. Mayor Firhad Hakim echoed this sentiment while outlining the initiatives taken by the state government to address the pollution crisis. According to his X post, a multi-pronged approach was implemented to achieve these results. Measures included stringent and immediate actions for solid waste management, deployment



of water sprinklers and mist cannons, mandatory use of scaffolding nets at construction sites, and the phasing out of older vehicles in favour of electric alternatives by the Kolkata Municipal Corporation and the State Transport Department. Other steps included the commitment to plant one crore saplings, installation of a dedicated construction and demolition waste processing plant, and continuous surveillance over polluting industries within the city. As part of the Central Government's urban air quality initiative, a total grant of Rs 21.02 crore was released to West Bengal in May. "We left no stone unturned to improve the AQI of Kolkata," Mayor Hakim stated. "However, the battle is still on, and I appeal to all the citizens to come forward. It is not only a mission of the Government but also of all the citizens of Kolkata," he added.

Mumbai police detain 2 minors for molesting 16-year-old girl with autism spectrum disorder

GNS News Agency, May 29

molestingAccording to the police, the girl is the only child of the complainant, a single mother who works at a beauty parlour. The girl's father separated from the family a few years ago. The Mumbai police on Thursday night detained two minors for allegedly molesting a 16-year-old girl with autism spectrum disorder. The two teenagers were served a notice and will soon be presented before the child welfare committee, officials said. The alleged incident took place around a month ago but only came to light during the girl's recent therapy session, where she revealed that the two boys had touched her inappropriately.

According to the police, as per the complaint filed by the girl's mother on April 28, the girl, a Class 10 student, was groped and kissed by the boys while she playing at a garden near a government hospital in central Mumbai. Acting

on the complaint, the police lodged an FIR under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act and traced the two boys, who are from Kanjarwada in Agrpada. Officials said the teenagers were served a notice under Section 35(3) of Bharatiya Nyagarik Suraksha Sanhita. According to the police, the girl is the only child of the complainant, a single mother who works at a beauty parlour. The girl's father separated from the family a few years ago. The mother told the police that she leaves her daughter alone at home when she has to go to work and has often found the girl in areas like Santacruz and Nagpada, which are far from their residence. According to the police, the mother and daughter argued, following which the girl was disturbed. Her doctor observed something amiss and asked her therapist to speak to her, which is when she revealed the alleged molestation, the police added.

Punjab Vigilance Bureau raids AAP MLA Raman Arora's residence in Jalandhar

GNS News Agency, May 29

The Punjab Vigilance Bureau on Friday raided AAP MLA Raman Arora's residence in Jalandhar amid growing allegations of corruption and unethical practices within the Municipal Corporation of Jalandhar, where he is accused of charging money for performing official duties and allegedly using threats to extort funds from residents. Arora, 54, the MLA from Jalandhar Central constituency, was inside his house, along with vigilance officials, as the raid continued.

While vigilance department officials did not respond to calls, a message sent by a spokesperson of the Chief Minister's Office confirmed the raid at his residence in Ashok

Nagar. "[Bhagwant] Mann's government has taken a big action by raiding its own MLA over corruption allegations. Complaints against Jalandhar MLA Raman Arora had been received, alleging that Arora used to send fake notices to residents through the officers of Municipal Corporation Jalandhar to threaten them, and then extort money in exchange for settling those notices," the message read. The investigation into Arora's activities gained considerable attention after the Punjab government withdrew his security detail about 10 days ago, raising eyebrows within both political circles and the public. Arora, who had previously been provided with an unusually large security detail—reportedly 14 gunmen—had his security completely removed without

Youth Congress protests over construction move on Pune's BMCC playground, says 'it's a gradual takeover'



GNS News Agency, May 29

Members of the Maharashtra Pradesh Youth Congress on Thursday staged a protest against the construction of a new engineering building on a portion of the playground in front of the Brihan Maharashtra College of Commerce (BMCC) in Pune. The playground land has been in use for over 80 years public resource for sports and community use and has reportedly shaped international-level athletes.

The Deccan Education Society (DES), which has taken the decision for the construction of building, defended the move, stating that only the required margin space would be used without obstructing the ground's use for sports and public activities. The protesters expressed concern that, although a small portion, approximately 15 per cent of the ground is being used now, it sets a precedent for future encroachment. "Today it's 15 per cent, tomorrow it will be

25 per cent. We will not allow this gradual takeover," said Akshay Jain, president of the media wing of the Maharashtra Pradesh Youth Congress. "The issue is not just about a lack of transparency. We are protesting the decision to take over the land from the playground. DES has 50 to 60 acres of other land available, yet they are targeting this particular ground," Jain said. Jain also accused DES of attempting to proceed without informing the public. "There were no invitations, hoardings, or official communications. Why is this being hidden from citizens?" he said, warning that the Youth Congress is prepared to take legal action.

Responding to the protest, Ashok Palande, vice chairman of the governing board of DES, said the construction will adhere to national standards and that the margin of the ground may be used only if necessary. "We assure there will be no obstruction to sports or public use. This can be discussed in our regular 15-day meetings. It is not an immediate crisis," he said. Deepak Kale, deputy secretary of DES, stated that the protesters are welcome to meet in the principal's cabin to discuss their concerns. "We are ready to provide all project-related details and clarify any doubts," Kale said. Amit Kulkarni, member of the Board of Management, said the construction had received all required sanctions from the Pune Municipal Corporation. "If there is anything found to be illegal, we are willing to rectify it," Kulkarni said. The police were deployed at the site under the supervision of Senior Inspector Girisha Nimbalkar to maintain law and order. No untoward incidents were reported. The protest highlights rising tensions between educational authorities and community stakeholders over the protection of open spaces in urban areas.

Driver flees with Rs 30 lakh, Delhi Police arrest him from Gujarat's Bhuj

GNS News Agency, May 29

The Delhi Police on Thursday arrested a man who had fled to Gujarat with Rs 30 lakh belonging to his employer earlier this month. The accused was identified as Prince, 27, a resident of Nilothi in Delhi. He was working as a driver for the complainant, the police said. He was arrested from Bhuj.

Officers said that the complainant had reported on May 15 that his driver ran away with Rs 30 lakh that he received during a business transaction. A case was subsequently registered at Tilak Nagar police station and an investigation was launched. The police team began by checking CCTV footage from various areas and conducting raids at known hideouts across Delhi. According to the police, as the investigation progressed, they utilised a combination of technical surveillance and manual intelligence, which eventually led them to Bhuj. A police team was immediately dispatched to Gujarat, and Prince was arrested in Bhuj. Upon his arrest, the police recovered Rs 26 lakh in cash from the accused. Additionally, they seized two gold rings, one gold



earring, and a mobile phone, all purchased using the stolen money. The total value of the cash and recovered items together stands close to Rs 27.5 lakh, the police added. Officers said that the accused had studied till Class 10 and had been hired as a driver by the complainant six months ago. According to the investigators, he took advantage of the complainant's trust and fled with the large amount of cash.

Come summer, it is raining Aamras thalis across Pune city. Here's where to check out

GNS News Agency, May 29

Mango season is wrapping up, making people flock to places still serving the aamras thalis across Pune, before the fruit bows out from the market. Aamras is made using Alphonso or Kesar mangoes and the pulp is served and served into bowls, often accompanied by puris, batata bhaji, shrikhand, and other treats that make the meal an indulgence. From vegetarian Maharashtrian thalis to versions with mango-based dishes, the city's food scene is filled with mango. Whether it is a family outing or a first-timer's introduction to this tradition, the Aamras thali has become a ritual for Pune-kars, a reminder that summer isn't just about the heat, but also about flavours that define the season.

Sukhakarta Pure Veg Dining Hall was started by Nilesh Shirke from Satara in 2018. It has three branches in Pune, with the main branch located in Mayur Colony, Kothrud. The second branch in Wakad opened six months ago, and the third in Baner was started three years ago. It features an open kitchen. The thali includes three sweet options such as the famous Aamras, Ukdicha Modak, and Strawberry Halwa. For starters, it offers Khandvi, Sabudana Cutlet, or Palak Chaat. The vegetable options include Kaju Paneer, Green Vatana, or Cabbage Tomatoes. In the dal section, there is Mix Dal and Ekodi Dal. The breads served are Phulka, Puri, and Makai Rotla. The rice options are Plain Rice, Masale Bhat, and Dal Khichdi. The meal is served with 'khatta meetha jaljeera'. The restaurant operates from 11 am to 3.30 pm and again from 7 pm to 10.30 pm.

Mathura Pure Veg, located at Jangali Maharaj Road, Deccan Gymkhana, Pune, was started almost 40 years ago and is currently run by Pune resident Abhijeet Chorge. Known for its thali offerings, Mathura serves a seasonal thali during mango season that includes Aamras along with five puris. The thali features a variety of items such as Chana masala, Paneer masala, Batata bhaji, Bhindi masala and Kurdai, Papad. For rice, the thali includes plain rice and Masale bhat. The meal is available daily during two time slots from 12 to 4 pm and again from 7 pm to 11 pm allowing customers to enjoy this spread at lunch or dinner. Naivedya Thali Restaurant, a well-loved pure veg-



etarian restaurant in Pune, was started by Bhaktobandhu Padhi in 2003. Located near Ghole Road, next to Balgandharva Chowk, Shivajinagar, Pune, it has become a go to place for those who enjoy a hearty and traditional Indian thali. The thali includes a delightful variety of dishes, starting with three types of sweets one of which is the seasonal favourite, Aamras. The chaat section offers popular items like chole tikki, dahi vada, and mini samosas. Rice lovers are treated to three options, including khichdi, steamed rice, and biryani. To accompany these are three types of Indian breads: phulka, puri, and paratha, along with four kinds of vegetables that change regularly. The thali also includes two types of dal, varan and dal tadka, as well as two kinds of kadhi, including a sweet version. Classic accompaniments like papad and achar complete the meal. Naivedya Thali is open for lunch from 11.30 am to 3.30 pm and for dinner from 7 pm to 11 pm, making it a perfect choice for anyone looking to enjoy a fulfilling and authentic Indian meal. Sukanta Thali, located at Pulachi Wadi Road, Deccan Gymkhana, is owned by Upesh Marlecha and was started in 2003 to offer meals in a thali format. During mango season, Sukanta serves a thali that includes two sweets, one of which is Aamras. The thali also includes chaat options such as mini samosas and dahi vada. The meal includes four vegetable preparations, two types of dal, one sweet dal, and one dal tadka and a choice of Indian breads puri, phulka, or Bhakri. For rice, there is plain rice and Pulav. This thali is available daily from 12.30 pm to 3.30 pm and from 7 pm to 10.30 pm.

any clear explanation from the government. Some Opposition leaders even celebrated the move, distributing sweets, suggesting that this may have been linked to ongoing complaints against the MLA.

Sources indicate that Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann had received multiple complaints alleging that Arora was involved in charging people for resolving municipal issues, using his position in the Jalandhar Municipal Corporation to demand bribes. "The complaints reportedly highlighted the MLA's influence in the local administration, where he allegedly used fake notices to threaten residents and extract money in exchange for resolving their problems," a senior AAP leader said. Arora, however, denied any involvement

in such activities. He was quick to distance himself from the recent arrest of Jalandhar Municipal Corporation's Assistant Town Planner Sukhdev Vashishth. In a statement, Arora clarified that he had no connection to Vashishth, who was arrested on May 15. Arora's proximity to BJP leaders has been a point of contention within the ruling party, especially as some party members have voiced concerns about his loyalty. Additionally, sources close to the party have mentioned that AAP leader Deepak Bali has been actively involved in Arora's constituency. Bali's ties to Delhi-based AAP leaders have further raised suspicions about Arora's political downfall as the party has seemingly sidelined him in his own constituency, giving Bali the upper hand.

Andheri, Borivali, and Bandra Terminus stations make the shortlist for railway’s access control pilot project



GNS News Agency, May 29

Entering Andheri, Borivali, and Bandra Terminus railway stations without a ticket may soon be impossible. The Western Railway (WR) has proposed to introduce a controlled access system at 12 crowded stations, including these three major stations in Mumbai. The proposal has been floated with the Railway Board, in accordance with a national directive given to all railway zones after previous stampede cases at railway stations. “The Railway Board had asked us to suggest some stations on the WR zone where controlled access system can be implemented, and accordingly, we have identified 12 of them according to the footfall, out of which three are from the Mumbai division,” a WR spokesperson said. The access control system would op-

erate in a way similar to the Metro stations, where entry and exit are controlled by electronic ticket validation at dedicated gates. It aims at checking unauthorised entry, improving monitoring of crowd movement, and increasing commuter safety at stations with high daily passenger traffic. The average daily foot traffic is 4.17 lakh at Andheri station, 4.54 lakh at Borivali, and 40,000 at Bandra Terminus. These stations tend to get excessively congested, especially during peak times, and access control can assist in properly managing crowds, the WR believes. The system would only allow valid ticket holders to enter the platforms, thereby limiting the possibility of overcrowding and facilitating faster response to emergencies. It would also help to combat ticketless travel and ensure management of crowds during festivals or peak season. “While there is no other word from the Railway Board other than identification of such railway stations, it would be too early to ascertain the details of the system and its implementation. However, the board is planning to launch it as a pilot project first,” the spokesperson added.

Besides Mumbai, the WR has also proposed the names of major stations in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, including Surat, Vapi, Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Udhana, Asarva, Ujjain, Sabarmati and Sehore. At present, the proposal is at its initial stage and consists only of a shortlist of stations for the pilot project. If sanctioned, the controlled access system could be a template for innovation at other major railway stations in India.

Hyderabad Airport Metro Rail okays DPRs for 3 corridors of Phase 2B, Telangana govt nod awaited

GNS News Agency, May 29

The Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) of the proposed Phase 2B of Hyderabad Metro Rail for three corridors — Jubilee Bus Station (JBS)-Medchal, JBS-Shameerpet, and Airport-Future City — have been approved by the Hyderabad Airport Metro Limited (HAML) board, officials said on Thursday. The proposed corridors span a length of 86.1 km and are estimated at a cost of ₹19,579 crore.

According to N V S Reddy, managing director of HAML, the DPRs are currently under review by the Telangana government. “Confidentiality needs to be maintained on certain aspects related to these until the state government approval is received, and therefore, full details cannot be provided at this time,” he said. However, he added that several aspects have been included in the DPR, along with transforming JBS into an international hub as per the directions of Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. He revealed that the JBS-Medchal route will be a fully elevated corridor of 24.5 kilometres with 18 stations whereas the JBS Station-Shameerpet route will be a 22-kilometer corridor with 14 stations. This route will be 20.35 km elevated and 1.65 km underground. The Metro MD said that the underground route will be near the Hakimpet Airport.

RGIA-Future City (Skill University) is 39.6 kilometers, of which 1.5 km will be underground from the airport, 21 km elevated, and 17 km at grade. He stated that it would be from Shamshabad International Airport to Skills University via Pedda Golconda and Raviralya ORR exits. N V S Reddy reiterated that the second phase (B) DPRs have been comprehensively prepared and submitted to the state government, keeping in view the central government guidelines, Metro rail construction estimates in other states, and the traffic needs of Hyderabad city. He stated that full details will be given once the state government approves the DPRs



and submits the proposal to the Central Government.

The HMRL currently operates three corridors covering 69 km and is the largest public-private partnership Metro rail project in the world. Under Phase-1, the HMRL has been operating LB Nagar to Miyapur, Nagole to Raidurgam, and JBS to MGBS corridors for the last five years. The stretch between MGBS to Falaknuma has not materialised, mainly due to objections to property acquisition and route alignment issues, and the new government has taken up this stretch along with the rest of the Phase 2 corridors.

Under phase 2, significant expansion to existing Metro rail corridors is planned for about 76 km at an estimated cost of Rs 24,269 crore. These include Miyapur to Patancheru (approximately 13.4 km) with about 10 stations; Nagole to Shamshabad Airport via LB Nagar and Chandrayangutta (approximately 29 km) with 24 stations; Raidurg to Kokapet (approximately 8 km) with eight stations; LB Nagar to Hayathnagar via Vanasthalipuram (approximately 7.1 km) with 6 stations; and MGBS to Falaknuma (approximately 7.5 km) with six stations.

Himachal power corporation chief engineer’s death: ‘Didn’t consider it appropriate to review earlier inquiry report,’ says ACS to HC



GNS News Agency, May 29

In the affidavit submitted to the HC on May 20, the ACS said, “In a fact-finding inquiry, there is no provision for allowing the delinquent officer or official to cross-examine witnesses. In the affidavit submitted to the HC on May 20, the ACS said, “In a fact-finding inquiry, there is no provision for allowing the delinquent officer or official to cross-examine witnesses.” Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) Onkar Sharma, probing into allegations of harassment faced by the late HPPCL chief engineer Vimal Negi in office, informed the Himachal Pradesh High Court that the Department of Multi-Purpose Projects (MPP) & Power had reverted the 66-page report back to him, asking the allegations made by the affected officers be re-examined to ensure a fair fact-finding process within 15 days, but he did not consider it appropriate to review his inquiry report, as it had already been concluded in accordance to established procedures.

In the affidavit submitted to the HC on May 20, the ACS said, “In a fact-finding inquiry, there is no provision for allowing the delinquent officer or official to cross-examine witnesses. This process is only applicable in a regular departmental inquiry, which has not commenced in the present case. The MPP & Power Department has been informed accordingly,” the affidavit states. ACS Sharma was assigned the task of conducting a probe into the death of Vimal Negi on March 19. Subsequently, Negi’s wife approached the HC, requesting that the case be handed over to the CBI. The court directed the ACS to submit a status report and affidavit on April 22. The affidavit and the report were filed in the court on May 20. Although the ACS also submitted the status report of his fact-finding probe to the HC, the status report is yet to be made public. However, the affidavit was shared with the counsel of the kin of victim Vimal Negi, who is demanding a CBI probe into the matter.

The affidavit reads, “The employees of HPPCL, independent individuals, and the concerned officers against whom allegations were levelled—Harikesh Meena, the then

Managing Director, Shivam Pratap, Director (Personnel), and Desh Raj, Director (Electrical)—appeared before the deponent during the course of the inquiry on different dates. Their statements were recorded as per their respective versions.” It further states, “The deponent did not consider it proper to review the earlier inquiry report, as the fact-finding had already been completed after due application of mind and in line with the procedures established. To the best of his knowledge and ability, there were no justifiable grounds to re-open the inquiry.” “It is, therefore, respectfully prayed that this status report/affidavit of the deponent may kindly be taken on record in the interest of justice,” the affidavit concludes. On Wednesday, during the course of hearing in the HC, Advocate General (AG) Anup Kumar Rattan informed the court that the ACS filed the status report, along with the affidavit, without intimating the office of AG. Rattan also contended in the court that DGP Atul Verma had also filed his independent status report in the HC without informing his office.

Former sarpanches demand government to clear pending bills

Hyderabad: Former sarpanches demanded the State government to clear their long-pending bills and stressed that the Rs 153 crore that was released on Wednesday were contractors’ bills.

The funds released by the State government pertain to the contractors’ bills taken up under Special Development Fund. The sarpanches’ bills have not been cleared yet, said Telangana Sarpanch Sangham JAC president S Yadaiah Goud.

In a statement issued on Thursday, he charged that the government cleared the contractors’ bills and was projecting as funds released for sarpanches bills.

The government should release State Finance Corporation funds for clearing cheques, which were approved by AEs and Des in the past. Bills for works, which were taken up after approval by gram panchayats, pending MGNREGAs bills and the cumulative pending bills of sarpanches, he demanded.

To this effect, a representation was submitted to the Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Secretary Lokesh Kumar on Thursday.

Karnataka HC stays Congress’s case against Amit Malviya, Arnab Goswami



GNS News Agency, May 29

The Karnataka High Court on Thursday stayed criminal proceedings against BJP IT cell head Amit Malviya and Republic TV editor-in-chief Arnab Goswami in a case related to allegedly spreading misinformation about the Indian National Congress operating an office in Turkey. The interim order in this case was passed by a single-judge vacation bench of Justice S Rachaiiah. The matter is set to be heard again on June 20.

Swaroop B N, the head of the Indian Youth Congress’s legal cell, had filed a complaint in this case at Bengaluru’s High Ground police station. The FIR under sections 192 and 352 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, under charges related to provocation to cause riot and insult to provoke

breach of the peace, had alleged that Malviya and Goswami had made an attempt to malign the Congress by circulating the claim that the Istanbul Congress Center building was the party’s office. In his petition before the high court, Malviya urged that the case be quashed and the investigation be stayed in the interim. His counsel argued that the opinions expressed on the issue of the Congress having an office in Turkey during a programme were unrelated to the Istanbul Congress Center issue, with the image of the same having been inadvertently posted. In a corrigendum published on Tuesday evening on X, Republic TV said that “an incorrect image was inadvertently used, erroneously depicting a building as the Congress office in Turkey by a video editor on the digital desk due to a technical error... The image had no connection to the content or context of the said video. This clip was not broadcast on Arnab Goswami’s debate show on 15th May 2025 or thereafter, and was not taken on-air, nor was the said erroneous image in any way related to the subject matter being discussed.”

Congress general secretary in charge of communication, Jairam Ramesh, had stated on social media that he hoped that the court would consider the damage caused by “repeated and deliberate malicious acts of these habitual offenders”. The controversy broke out amid heightened tensions between India and Turkey, sparked by the latter’s support for Pakistan following the Pahalgam terror attack and India’s military response, Operation Sindoor.

Delhi govt tightens SOP for felling trees: Court panel’s nod mandatory to cut down 50 or more

GNS News Agency, May 29

In a major shift, the Delhi Government has introduced a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) which stipulates that no project involving the removal of 50 or more trees in the Capital can go ahead without approval from the Central Empowered Committee (CEC), a body set up by the Supreme Court in 2002 to oversee environmental matters. The Department of Forests and Wildlife issued the new SOP through a gazette notification on April 24 this year. Under the new rules, even if a tree officer — an official who grants permission under the Delhi Preservation of Trees Act, 1973 — clears a proposal, the permission “shall not be acted upon unless the same is approved by the CEC,” the order states.

Marking a break from the earlier SOP which gave tree officers full authority to allow felling, irrespective of the number of trees, the revised rules have shifted the final decision-making to the CEC for larger projects. This means no physical removal of trees can begin until the CEC has reviewed the file and approved the plan. The SOP states that felling permission “can be granted only by way of an exception and not in a routine manner.” It adds that even the illegal felling of a single full-grown tree “hurts the environment and the society as a whole.” In December last year, the Supreme Court had mandated that tree felling permission for 50 or more trees require CEC clearance.

Once a tree officer clears any application involving 50 or more trees, they must send the full set of documents to the CEC right away. The CEC may ask for more details or changes and has the power to approve, reject, or modify the permission. The order also says that no tree can be cut unless the required compensatory plantation — planting of new trees in exchange — is completed. “While granting permission to fell/ transplant 50 or more trees, unless the case is exceptional, actual tree-cutting work shall not be undertaken unless compliance is made with the requirement of planting trees by way of compensatory afforestation,” the SOP stated. If trees are removed illegally in large numbers, the response must be immediate. The SOP said: “In case of any illicit felling of 50 or more trees, the CEC will be informed by the tree officer within 24 hours.”

Applicants must follow detailed steps before applying to cut or transplant trees. These include uploading a fully filled form, ownership records, an exact count and location of all trees involved (with geo-tagged photos), and a detailed map of where replacement trees will be planted. If the



project is related to construction or infrastructure, architectural plans showing how trees are impacted must also be submitted. The SOP laid out how many trees must be planted to make up for those removed, and who will be responsible for maintaining them. For up to 25 trees, the applicant can carry out the plantation themselves. For more than 25, the applicant must provide land, pay for planting, and maintain the new trees for seven years. The health and location of each sapling must be tracked, and geo-tagged progress photos uploaded annually. If an applicant fails to maintain the new trees, their security deposit will be forfeited, and the forest department will take over. The department can also demand additional funds to improve the site if needed. The SOP has also placed limits on how many permissions can be granted from the same land. Only two permissions per year can be granted from the same area, and the total land cannot exceed one hectare. Even if two applications are filed separately in the same year — and the second one alone involves fewer than 50 trees — if the total across both exceeds 49 trees, CEC approval is still required.

Tree officers must visit each project site, check whether any trees can be saved, and list which trees are to be cut, transplanted, or kept. The SOP has also said, “The tree officers shall make an effort to save as many trees as possible. The tree officers shall consider whether; by pruning or by some other methods, the trees can be saved from felling/transplantation.” These trees must be marked — red for felling, yellow for transplantation — before final permission is given. The SOP said a “Speaking Order” must be issued and permissions will be valid for two years, with a possible extension of one more year if justified.

Former Andhra Pradesh cricketer, serial offender caught for impersonating Telangana CMO official



GNS News Agency, May 29

The Hyderabad police, on Thursday, arrested a 32-year-old former Andhra Pradesh cricketer for impersonating a senior official from the office of Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and attempting to defraud prominent business figures. The Cyber Crime Police said Budumuru Nagaraju, a former Ranji cricketer, created a fake email ID reventhreddyosd@gmail.com and sent fraudulent emails to various business persons while impersonating the Personal Secretary and Officer on Special Duty (OSD) to the Chief Minister of Telangana State.

Nagaraju, a Srikakulam native, allegedly used a mix of email, WhatsApp, and phone calls to contact and attempt to deceive his targets, the police said. The police received a complaint from the OSD to the CM of Telangana concerning the fraudulent activity. “An individual, mobile number 9666349191, is sending fake emails (e.g., from reventhreddyosd@gmail.com) and making WhatsApp calls, falsely representing themselves as the OSD’s Personal Secretary and Officer on Special Duty. One instance involved contacting Krishna Mohan Bollineni, MD of Bollineni Infra Projects,” the complaint said. A case was registered under sections 66C and 66D of the IT Act and 319(2) (cheating by personation) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The Srikakulam-native is found to be earlier involved in 13 cases in Telangana and 16 cases in Andhra Pradesh. Additionally, a Non-Bailable Warrant (NBW) is pending against him in the XII additional chief metropolitan magistrate court, Nampally, police said. Nagaraju, in earlier instances, posed as high-profile political associates, including the personal secretaries of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, former AP CM Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, former Telangana minister KT Rama Rao, etc lead-

ing to his arrest in multiple cities.

According to the police, he targeted several senior businessmen, including managing directors of Rapido, Gupta Realty, and Bollineni Infra Projects, using this fake identity, and attempted to solicit financial assistance under the guise of official requests. The police have issued a public advisory urging citizens to exercise caution and not respond to emails or messages purportedly from senior govt officials requesting financial favours. Victims of cybercrime are encouraged to report incidents by dialling 1930 or visiting cybercrime.gov.in.

Rights groups, Left parties want judicial probe into Chhattisgarh encounter

GNS News Agency, May 29

Khammam: Different people’s organisations and Left parties demanded the government to order a judicial probe by a Supreme Court judge into the killing of Maoist Namballa Keshav Rao and 26 others in an encounter in Chhattisgarh on Wednesday. Speaking to the media here on Thursday, CCA leaders Kaki Bhaskar and Ravi Maruth, Bharat Bachao national vice president Dr MF Gopinath, CPM district secretary Nunna Nageswara Rao, CPI leader Dandi Suresh, CPI ML Mass Line district secretary G Venkateswarlu, Telangana People’s JAC district convener Vijay, Civil Liberties Committee leaders Viplav Kumar, Praja Front leader Sanjeeva Rao and others condemned the killing of Maoists in fake encounters. The leaders found fault with the statements of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah who, responding to the encounter, claimed they had achieved a great success and that the killing of a high-ranking leader like Keshav Rao had never happened in history. The Centre, which could not catch the terrorists who infiltrated the country and shot citizens, was waging an unconstitutional war to protect the interests of big corporate companies and to exploit mineral wealth in Central India. Drones and paramilitary forces that should be on the India-Pakistan borders have been aimed at eliminating Maoists, the rights groups leaders said.

Army Chief General Zaman vs Chief Adviser Prof Yunus: Power struggle in Bangladesh over timing of election



GNS News Agency, May 29

This apprehension was part of a discussion at the council of advisers that Chief Adviser Prof Mohammed Yunus held late Thursday (May 22, 2025) night after Army Chief Waker Uz Zaman held a closed door meeting with Commanding Officers on Wednesday (May 21, 2025) where he expressed unhappiness over the functioning of the interim government and said, "Elections must be held by December and that only an elected government should determine the nation's course and not an unelected administration".Addressing the Commanding Officers in Wednesday's meeting, Army Chief General Waker Uz Zaman said certain policies of the interim government were not part of the understanding on which the interim government was configured after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government last August.

It was learned that General Waker Uz Zaman expressed serious concern over "key decisions" of the interim government and claimed that the Armed Forces of Bangladesh were not briefed before taking those decisions. The stock taking meeting of the army chief came in the backdrop of fast paced decisions that the Yunus administration has taken reportedly to open a "humanitarian corridor" to the Rakhine province of Myanmar. At a certain point during the meeting, it was mentioned that the officer corps stands united in support of General Zaman and that they

are ready to "act upon command". The military meet also took note of the interim government's decision to introduce a school pledge that removed mention of the Liberation War prompting a Commanding Officer (CO) to say that the "Liberation war legacy and national prestige are non-negotiable."

Responding to the criticism in the military meet, Prof Yunus called for an unscheduled meeting of the Council of Advisers of the interim administration on Thursday (May 22, 2025). According to sources in Dhaka, during the meeting, Prof Yunus expressed frustration about the evolving situation and discussed with his colleagues whether there is a need for him to continue as the Chief Adviser to the interim government.He said that under the present circumstances only a "controlled election" can be held and that fully transparent election is not possible by December this year. At one point, reportedly a draft speech for the nation was prepared with Prof Yunus indicating that he would resign. However, the advisers prevailed in this discussion and said, leaving the responsibility of governance at this stage would land Bangladesh in a more volatile situation and the responsibility of this chaos would fall on Yunus himself.A major point of contention between Prof Yunus-led advisers and the powerful military establishment is the initiative to establish a so called "humanitarian corridor" connecting Chittagong with Myanmar's Rakhine province.

The argument of the Yunus administration is that the "humanitarian corridor" will provide medicines and other necessary items for the conflict-torn Rakhine which is known as the centre of the Rohingya crisis. It has also been suggested that the corridor will turn into a security threat as it is difficult to ensure proper management of such an initiative as most of Rakhine known for drugs and weapons smuggling has been taken over by the insurgent group Arakan Army which is fighting both the military forces of Myanmar as well as the Rohingya militants. The Hindu has learnt that the idea of the corridor was "unequivocally" rejected by General Waker Uz Zaman in Wednesday's meeting who described it as "completely unacceptable" because of the security risks involved.

Trump administration bars Harvard University from enrolling foreign students

GNS News Agency, May 29

The Trump administration revoked Harvard University's ability to enrol international students in its escalating battle with the Ivy League school, saying thousands of current students must transfer to other schools or leave the country.The Department of Homeland Security announced the action Thursday (May 22, 2025), saying Harvard has created an unsafe campus environment by allowing "anti-American, pro-terrorist agitators" to assault Jewish students on campus. Without offering evidence, it also accused Harvard of coordinating with the Chinese communist party.

"This means Harvard can no longer enroll foreign students and existing foreign students must transfer or lose their legal status," the agency said in a statement.Harvard enrolls almost 6,800 foreign students at its campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts, accounting for more than a quarter of its student body. Most are graduate students, coming from more than 100 countries.

Trump administration revokes Harvard's right to enroll international students The Department of Homeland Security accused Harvard of failing to protect Jewish stu-



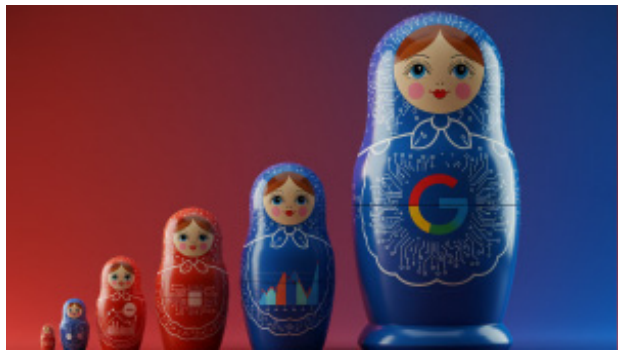
dents and of collaborating with the Chinese Communist Party. | Video Credit: The Hindu'This administration is holding Harvard accountable for fostering violence, antisemitism, and coordinating with the Chinese Communist Party on its campus," Kristi Noem said in a statement.The administration revoked Harvard's certification in the Student and Exchange Visitor Program, which gives the school the ability to sponsor international students to get their visas and attend school in the United States.

Google AI Matryoshka: Rearchitecting the search giant with AI even as privacy concerns loom

Google's annual I/O developer conference in 2025 was less a showcase of disparate product updates and more a systematic unveiling of an AI-centric future. The unspoken theme was that of a Matryoshka doll: at its core, a refined and potent artificial intelligence, with each successive layer representing a product or platform drawing life from this central intelligence. Google is not merely sprinkling AI across its offerings; it is fundamentally rearchitecting its vast ecosystem around it. The result is an increasingly interconnected and agentic experience, one that extends to users, developers, and enterprises alike, prompting a re-evaluation of the firm's responsibilities concerning the data that fuels this transformation: "More intelligence is available, for everyone, everywhere," declared Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google and its parent company, Alphabet. "And the world is responding, adopting AI faster than ever before." This statement signals a push towards a more intelligent, autonomous, and personalised Google. Yet, as each layer of this AI Matryoshka is peeled back, the data upon which this intelligence is built, the copyrighted material ingested by its models, and the implications for user privacy are brought into sharper focus, forming a critical, if less trumpeted, narrative.

It has been nearly two years since Satya Nadella of Microsoft described Google as an "800-pound gorilla" challenged to perform new AI tricks. Google's response, particularly evident at I/O 2025, suggests the gorilla is learning to pirouette.At the innermost core of Google's AI strategy lie its foundational models. The keenly awaited Gemini 2.5 Flash and Pro models, now nearing general availability, represent more than incremental improvements; they are a refined engine for AI experiences. The "enhanced reasoning mode in Gemini 2.5 Pro," dubbed Deep Think, which leverages parallel processing, demonstrates impressive capabilities in complex mathematics and coding, even achieving a notable score on the 2025 USAMO, a demanding mathematics benchmark. While Deep Think will initially be available to select testers via the Gemini API, its potential to grapple with highly complex problems signals a significant advancement in AI reasoning.

Gemini 2.5 Flash, the workhorse model, has also received substantial upgrades, purportedly becoming "better in nearly every dimension." It boasts increased efficiency, using 20-30% fewer tokens (the units of data processed by AI models), and is set to become the default in the Gemini application. These models, enhanced with native audio output for more naturalistic conversational interactions in 2.5 Pro and Flash, and a pioneering multi-speaker text-to-speech function supporting two voices across over 24 languages, constitute the powerful nucleus from which all other

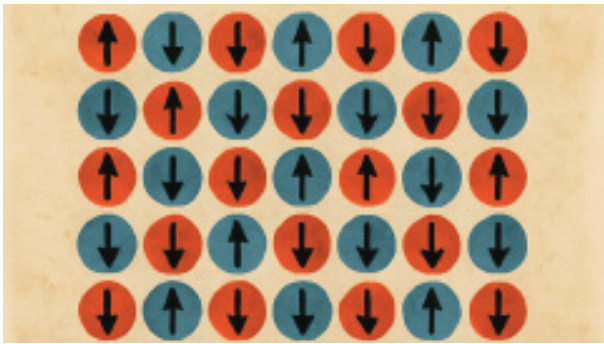


AI functionalities radiate.This computational prowess is built upon Google's proprietary Tensor Processing Units (TPUs). The seventh generation TPU, Ironwood, is said to deliver a tenfold performance increase over its predecessor, offering a formidable 42.5 exaFLOPS of compute per pod. Such hardware forms the bedrock for training and deploying these sophisticated AI systems.However, the very power of these generative models, especially Imagen 4 and Veo 3 for visual media, and Lyria 2 for music generation, necessitates a closer look at their training data. The creation of rich, nuanced outputs depends on ingesting colossal datasets.

Persistent industry-wide concerns revolve around the use of copyrighted material without explicit consent or remuneration for original creators. Google highlighted tools such as SynthID, designed to watermark AI-generated content, and a new SynthID Detector for its verification. Yet, these are mitigations, not comprehensive solutions, to the intricate and ongoing debate surrounding copyright and fair use in an era increasingly defined by generative AI. The provenance and a Fiduciary responsibility over the data remain complex issues.Platform Proliferation

One layer out from the core models are the platforms and APIs that democratise access to this AI. The Gemini API and Vertex AI are pivotal here, serving as the primary conduits for developers and enterprises. Google aims to improve the developer experience by offering "thought summaries," providing transparency into the model's reasoning, and extending "thinking budgets" to Gemini 2.5 Pro, giving developers more control over computational resources.Critically, native SDK support for the Model Context Protocol (MCP) has been incorporated into the Gemini API. This represents a significant move towards fostering a more interconnected ecosystem of AI agents, enabling them to communicate and collaborate with greater efficacy by sharing contextual information.

‘Minimal’ model captures neurons, flow of opinions, exotic matter



Biologists have the fruit fly. Botanists have the thale cress. Neurologists have the roundworm. These are model organisms: plants and animals that scientists in each of these fields study to make sense of almost all other plants and animals in the world.For example, in the 1990s, Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun discovered a new form of RNA called microRNA (miRNA) in the roundworm Caenorhabditis elegans. For revealing that miRNA regulates genes and allows certain physiological processes in all organisms — including humans — to function properly, Ambros and Ruvkun received the medicine Nobel Prize in 2024.Similarly, scientists studying recombinant DNA have Escherichia coli, toxicologists have rats, anatomists have zebrafish, those studying hepatitis have rhesus macaques, and so on.

The German physicist Ernst Ising created the Ising model in 1924 following a suggestion by his PhD supervisor Wilhelm Lenz. The Ising model provides a simple way to solve problems involving systems where different types of units interact with each other.For example, say there's a gas of a few million hydrogen atoms trapped in a chamber and a magnetic field is applied. You need to find out how much the energy of the gas has changed. Since each of these atoms itself is like a tiny magnet and has a north pole (or south pole) pointing in some direction, you can represent it as a grid of atoms:... where ? means 'north is pointing up' and ? means 'north is pointing down'. This is a basic instance of the Ising model. You can say that if two neighbouring atoms are ?? or ?? (anti-aligned), it entails an energy of X, and if they're ?? or ?? (aligned), an energy of Y. This way, you have a simple mathematical way to estimate various values of X and Y throughout the grid and use them to quickly calculate the overall energy.The Ising model has been used to understand the properties of many solids and liquids in various conditions — including magnetism in metals and alloys and the motion of atoms. Scientists have also used it to simulate land-use change, the flow of opinions in families and religious congregations, and to make sense of neural networks and lay the foundations of modern artificial intelligence (AI). Such work won the US physicist John Hopfield a share of the physics Nobel Prize last year.

But for the great applicability and ease of use of the Ising model, there are also many natural systems whose dynamics it doesn't capture. This is disappointing. One important class of systems is where the direction of effect matters. In the first neural network that Hopfield designed, for example, information could flow in either direction in a connection between two nodes in a network. But in a subsequent version called a feedforward neural network, information could only flow from node A to node B, not from B to A. Such networks were important to build AI models with memory.A new study published in Physical Review Letters has introduced a new form of the classic Ising model that, by incorporating non-reciprocal interactions, could recreate many properties of one-way networks. As a result, the new model can simulate a larger variety of real-world systems, including social networks, political strategies, and ecological dynamics.Scientists develop models to understand the simplest set of rules required to explain how a given system works at different scales. "While minimalistic," the researchers wrote in their paper, the new model "contains features arising in models of the human brain, opinion dynamics, ... and micromechanical oscillators". This means these features' properties can now be explored using the model.The researchers are Yael Avni, David Martin, Daniel Seara, and Vincenzo Vitelli of the University of Chicago and Michel Fruchart of ESPCI Paris.If a system has non-reciprocal interactions, it means the relationship between two components is asymmetric. For example, the way atom A affects atom B won't be the same way atom B affects atom A. Such interactions are prevalent in the real world, including in neuroscience, ecology, and active matter.

For example, in a hierarchical network like a political

India likely to ask for more security for diplomats after 2 Israeli staffers killed in US



New Delhi: In the wake of killing of two Israeli embassy staffers in the US capital, India is expected to urge US authorities to ramp up security for its diplomats and embassy in Washington DC, top sources said."The security of our diplomats is a sensitive matter. We are having a close look at the issue after what happened to the two Israeli embassy officials," one source said.

The matter has gained urgency as an all-party delegation led by Congress MP Shashi Tharoor is set to visit Washington in the first week of June, and Khalistani separatists have levelled threats against the team, they added.The all-party delegation is going to the US as part of New Delhi's global outreach to highlight its new approach towards terrorism sponsored by Pakistan and to explain the rationale behind Operation Sindoor, which targeted terrorist infrastructure in territories controlled by Islamabad.External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar condemned the killing of the Israeli diplomats in a social media post."Our thoughts and prayers are with their families and colleagues. The perpetrators must be brought to justice," he said.

The victims, a male and a female staff member of the Israeli Embassy in Washington, were fatally shot by an unidentified assailant as they exited the Capital Jewish

party, party members are influenced by the leader's decision but the leader isn't affected by the members' decisions. In biology, the population of a parasite species could affect the well-being of the host but the reverse relationship need not hold. Similarly, power grids often use one-way signals to manage small parts of the network — including to adjust power flow, detect faults, and to send updates between substations. To understand the behaviour of any of these systems, physicists and engineers need models that can anticipate the effects of asymmetric relationships.Non-reciprocal systems also often display a phenomenon called a limit cycle: as changes propagate within a system, the entire system develops sustained, time-dependent oscillations. Models like the new non-reciprocal Ising model are required to understand how they evolve over time.Two rules and one conditionIn the new study, the researchers developed a non-reciprocal Ising model with two kinds of atoms, P and Q, each of which can be ? or ?. These atoms are arranged on two grids, one in two dimensions and the other in three dimensions. Both grids follow two rules:(i) Ps next to Ps and Qs next to Qs tend to align. This means that over time Ps and Qs can form islands of uniform alignment.(ii) If a P is next to a Q, then the P will try to align with the Q (? to ? or ? to ?). However, a Q next to a P will tend to become anti-aligned with the P (? to ? or ? to ?). This is the non-reciprocal interaction.

In the reciprocal Ising model, neighbouring atoms being ?? or ?? entailed an energy of X and being ?? or ?? entailed an energy of Y. This meant the overall energy of the system would have been some combination of X and Y. When he created his neural network in the 1980s, John Hopfield set up a similar grid, then gave each node in the grid a condition to follow: whether it was ? or ? depended on which state made sure the system's overall energy was lower. By minimising that energy, all the nodes in the network settled down into a given pattern of ? and ?. Similarly, in the new study, the researchers gave their Ps and Qs a rule to follow. Rather than minimise the overall energy of the grid, each P or Q would have to minimise its own "self-ish energy".

The properties of this non-reciprocal Ising model, whatever they are, also tell us about real-world setups that are constructed the same way, e.g. information flowing in political parties and parasites and hosts interacting in an ecosystem. So what did the researchers find?First, they found that at any given time, the non-reciprocal Ising model could have one of three phases: disordered, where the ?s and ?s are all arranged too randomly for there to be an overall 'order'; ordered, where the ?s and ?s have a fixed arrangement that doesn't keep varying; and the swap phase, where which species has the most order — Ps or Qs — keeps alternating over time, like the tick-tock of a clock.

A non-reciprocal Ising model in 3D, shown here in two particular states. The blue dots show ?? states and the shade depicts the depth of dots along the y axis.A non-reciprocal Ising model in 3D, shown here in two particular states. The blue dots show ?? states and the shade depicts the depth of dots along the y axis. | Photo Credit: arXiv:2409.07481v2The researchers also found important differences between the 2D and 3D versions of the model. In 2D, both the ordered and the swap phases were suppressed whereas in 3D, the swap phase was able to attain a stable state.

(According to another paper by the same group of researchers published in Physical Review E, the 3D swap phase had the properties of a time crystal. This is wonderfully strange: time crystals are an unusual state of matter in which a material has a stable, oscillating state.)Finally, the researchers found that if they introduced an asymmetry between Ps and Qs in some form — e.g. the rate at which they flipped from ? to ? or vice versa — the ordered phase was able to stabilise in the 2D grid.The Ising model and various revisions to it revolutionised the study of condensed-matter physics — often by revealing the simple rules lying at the obscured heart of seemingly complex systems. By extending the Ising model to include non-reciprocal interactions, the researchers behind the new studies have now expanded the model's usefulness to more domains across scientific fields.The phase transitions found in the new model may now reveal hitherto unrecognised dynamics in these domains.The findings also have potential applications in understanding rhythmic activities in biological systems and designing synthetic 'active materials' — which take in energy and perform some function, like bacteria swimming in water, starlings murmuring in mesmerising patterns in the sky, and even microscopic robots figuring out which formation to fly in.

Museum on Wednesday night (local time).US Homeland Security confirmed the deaths with authorities, saying that the lone suspect has been taken into custody.

Currently visiting Denmark, EAM Jaishankar took to X to convey India's solidarity with Israel and called for swift justice.Asked about the killings at a weekly media briefing, External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said: "This is deeply shocking. We condemn the attack... Those responsible for this heinous act must be brought to justice. Safety and security of diplomatic staff is paramount."Israeli embassy staffers Yaron Lischinsky and Sarah Lynn Milgrim were shot dead by a man outside a Jewish museum in Washington D.C. on Wednesday evening, according to police.The suspect, Elias Rodriguez, shouted "Free, free Palestine" after he was arrested.

All Israeli missions around the world, including in New Delhi, also lowered the flag to half-mast expressing grief over the attack and in memory of the deceased."In profound sorrow, we lower the flag today to remember Yaron and Sarah, victims of a brutal terrorist act in Washington, DC. May their memory be a blessing," the Embassy of Israel in India posted on X.Earlier, US Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem confirmed the shooting, calling it a "senseless" act."Two Israeli Embassy staff were senselessly killed tonight near the Jewish Museum in Washington,

DC. We are actively investigating and working to get more information to share. Please pray for the families of the victims. We will bring this depraved perpetrator to justice," she posted on X.Former US President Donald Trump also issued a sharp condemnation of the attack, calling it an act rooted in hatred and anti-Semitism.Posting on Truth Social, he said, "These horrible DC killings, based obviously on anti-semitism, must end, now! Hatred and Radicalism have no place in the USA. Condolences to the families of the victims. So sad that such things as this can happen! God Bless You all!"

Only 900 speakers of the Sanna language remain. Now Cyprus' Maronites are mounting a comeback



GNS News Agency, May 29

KORMAKITIS, Cyprus — Ash dangled precariously from Iosif Skordis' cigarette as he reminisced with fellow villagers in a language on the edge of extinction, one that partly traces its roots to the language Jesus Christ once spoke. The 97-year-old Skordis is one of only 900 people in the world who speak Cypriot Maronite Arabic, or Sanna. Today, his village of Kormakitis is the last bastion of a language once spoken by tens of thousands of people across dozens of villages.

The tongue, an offshoot of Syrian Arabic that has absorbed some Greek, has been passed from generation to generation in this windswept community in Cyprus. Until less than two decades ago, there was no written script, or even an alphabet, since parents transmitted it to children in conversation. Only a handful of people are trained to teach it. Sanna is at risk of disappearing, according to the Council of Europe's minority language experts. One Indigenous language dies every two weeks, the United Nations estimates, diminishing the tapestry of human knowledge one strand at a time.

But the 7,500-strong Maronite community in Cyprus is pushing back. With help from the Cypriot government and the European Union, it has built schools, created a Sanna alphabet to publish textbooks and begun classes to keep the language alive and thriving. "Sanna ... is undoubtedly one of the most distinguishing features of our cultural identity," said Yiannakis Moussas, the Maronite community's representative in the Cypriot legislature. He spoke in the Kormakitis coffeehouse adorned with soccer trophies and banners emblazoned with a Lebanese cedar. "And it's striking evidence of our heritage. The fact that we speak a kind of Arabic over so many centuries makes it clear that we descend from areas of Syria and Lebanon." The language was brought to Cyprus by waves of Arab Christians fleeing persecution by invading Arab Muslim fighters in what is now Syria, Lebanon and Israel, starting as early as the 8th century. Sanna at its root is a semitic language that, unlike other Arabic dialects, contains traces of the Aramaic that was spoken by populations prior to the Arab invasion of the Levant, according to University of Cyprus linguistics professor Marilena Kariolemou, who leads the team responsible for the language's revitalization. That's because the Maronite community in Cyprus was isolated from other Arabic-speaking populations.

But as Maronites increasingly interacted with the

island's majority Greek-speaking population and became bilingual, Sanna evolved to incorporate several Greek words, adding to its uniqueness among the many Arabic dialects. According to Kariolemou, Sanna contains five vowels similar to Greek and another three similar to Aramaic, while consonants whose sounds are formed in the back of the throat have diminished, likely because of the Greek influence. Sanna also adopted Greek syntax, she said.

Until the mid-1970s, the Maronite community was largely centered around four villages: Asomatos, Ayia Marina, Karpasia and Kormakitis as the cultural center. But the 1974 Turkish invasion that split Cyprus into a breakaway Turkish Cypriot north and a Greek Cypriot south, where the internationally recognized government is seated, saw most Maronites dispersed throughout the south. Asomatos and Ayia Marina are empty of Maronite inhabitants and are now Turkish army camps. Moussas, the community representative, said the consequences of 1974 were "catastrophic" for the Maronites as they gravitated toward the island's major cities, putting their culture and language at risk as children attended Greek-speaking schools and intermarriage with Greek Cypriots increased. It's said that currently, only one in five Maronite marriages are between members of the community.

That left Kormakitis as the linguistic "hive" for Cypriot Maronite Arabic, only spoken by residents over 50, according to retired teacher Ilias Zonias. Born in Kormakitis, Zonias is the only native Sanna speaker qualified to teach the language. Kormakitis was a closed society in which residents spoke Sanna, while their kids went to school not knowing Greek. That's how the language was preserved, Zonias said. Still, speakers after 1974 began to dwindle until around the turn of the millennium, when the Maronite community with the help of the Cypriot government increased efforts to save the language. Cyprus' 2004 membership in the EU was a milestone for Sanna as the bloc poured resources into safeguarding Indigenous minority languages, a designation that Cypriot authorities had bestowed. Kariolemou said her team in 2013 set up a recorded archive of spoken Sanna, some 280 hours long, for further study. A 27-letter alphabet was created in mostly Latin characters, thanks mainly to the work of linguist Alexander Borg. Grammar was formulated and refined, enabling the publication of books for teaching Sanna. Language courses are in their early stages, Skordis said, with about 100 children and adults in classes in Kormakitis and the Saint Maronas primary school in the Nicosia suburb of Lakatamia. A summer language camp for children and adults in Kormakitis has also been created. An initiative is underway for native-born speakers — primarily Kormakitis residents — to learn how to teach Sanna. At Ayios Maronas primary school, 20 kindergarten-age children are learning the language with books containing QR codes that can be scanned so students can follow an audio adaptation on school-provided tablets. But for Sanna to have a real future, there is no substitute for young families returning in large numbers to Kormakitis, where the language can be taught in the newly built, EU-funded school, Moussas said. Community leaders, however, aren't pleased with the low number of people expressing interest. Moussas said community leaders and the Cypriot government are looking into offering incentives, primarily to make it easier to find housing.

White House slashing staff in major overhaul of National Security Council, officials say

GNS News Agency, May 29

President Donald Trump is ordering a major overhaul of the National Security Council that will shrink its size, lead to the ouster of some political appointees and return many career government employees back to their home agencies, according to two U.S. officials and one person familiar with the reorganization. The number of staff at the NSC is expected to be significantly reduced, according to the officials, who requested anonymity to discuss the sensitive personnel matter.

The shake-up is just the latest shoe to drop at the NSC, which is being dramatically made over after the ouster early this month of Mr Trump's national security adviser Mike Waltz, who in many ways had hewed to traditional Republican foreign policy. Secretary of State Marco Rubio has been serving as national security adviser since the ouster of Mr Waltz, who was nominated to serve as Mr Trump's ambassador to the United Nations.

The move is expected to elevate the importance of the State Department and Pentagon in advising Mr Trump on important foreign policy moves. But, ultimately, Mr Trump relies on his own instincts above all else when making decisions. The NSC, created during the Truman administration, is an arm of the White House tasked with advising and assisting the president on national security and foreign policy and coordinating among various government agencies. Mr Trump was frustrated in his first term by political appointees and advisers who he felt gummed up his "America First" agenda. There were roughly 395 people working at the NSC, including about 180 support staff, according to one official. About 90 to 95 of those being ousted are policy or subject-matter experts seconded from other government agencies. They will be given an opportunity to return to their home agencies if they want. Many of the political appointees will also be given positions elsewhere in the administration, the official said. The NSC has been in a continual state of tumult during the early going of Mr Trump's second go-around in the White House.

Mr Waltz was ousted weeks after Mr Trump fired several NSC officials, just a day after the influential far-right activist Laura Loomer raised concerns directly to him about staff loyalty. Ms Loomer has in the past spread 9/11 conspiracy theories and promoted QAnon, an apocalyptic and convoluted conspiracy theory centred on the belief that Mr Trump is fighting the "deep state," and took credit for the ouster of the NSC officials that she argued were disloyal. And the White House, days into the administration, sidelined about 160 NSC aides, sending them home while the administration reviewed staffing and tried to align it with Mr Trump's agenda. The aides were career government employees, commonly referred to as detailees.

This latest shake-up amounts to a "liquidation" of NSC staffing, with both career government detailees on assignment to the NSC being sent back to their home agencies and several political appointees being pushed out of their positions, according to the person familiar with the decision. A White House official who spoke on the condition of anonymity confirmed that the overhaul, first reported by Axios, was underway. Andy Baker, the national security adviser to Vice-President J.D. Vance, and Robert Gabriel, an assistant to the president for policy, will serve as deputy na-



The move is expected to elevate the importance of the State Department and Pentagon in advising Mr Trump on important foreign policy moves

tional security advisers, according to the White House official. Mr Waltz, during his short tenure heading the NSC, came under searing criticism in March after revelations that he added journalist Jeffrey Goldberg to a private text chain on an encrypted messaging app that was used to discuss planning for a sensitive military operation against Houthi militants in Yemen. Mr Waltz has taken responsibility for building the text chain but has said he does not know how Mr Goldberg ended up being included.

Ms Loomer had encouraged Mr Trump to purge aides who she believes are insufficiently loyal to the "Make America Great Again" agenda. She also complained to sympathetic administration officials that Mr Waltz was too reliant on "neocons" — shorthand for the more hawkish neoconservatives within the Republican Party — as well as what she perceived as "not-MAGA-enough" types, the person said. It wasn't just Ms Loomer who viewed Mr Waltz suspiciously. He was viewed with a measure of scepticism by some in the MAGA world who saw the former Army Green Beret and three-term congressman as too tied to Washington's foreign policy establishment. On Russia, Mr Waltz shared Mr Trump's concerns about the high price tag of extensive U.S. military aid to Ukraine. But Mr Waltz also advocated for further diplomatically isolating President Vladimir Putin — a position that was out of step with Mr Trump, who has viewed the Russian leader, at moments, with admiration for his cunning in dealings with Mr Trump's predecessors. His more hawkish rhetoric on Iran and China, including U.S. policy toward Taiwan, seemed increasingly out of step with Mr Trump, who — setting aside belligerent rhetoric about taking over Greenland from Denmark — has tilted more toward military restraint and diplomacy in facing some of the United States' most challenging issues with adversaries.

Trump administration puts new limits on reporters at Pentagon



GNS News Agency, May 29

U.S. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth on Friday (May 23, 2025) issued orders that require journalists to have official escorts within much of the Pentagon building, the latest in a series of Trump administration restrictions placed on the press. The measures, which take effect immediately, bar credentialed reporters from most of the Department of Defence headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, unless they have an official approval and escort. "While the Department remains committed to transparency, the Department is equally obligated to protect CSNI (classified intelligence) and sensitive information - the unauthorized disclosure of which could put the lives of U.S. Service members in danger," Mr. Hegseth said in a memorandum. He called the protection of classified national intelligence information and operational security "an unwavering imperative for the Department."

The Pentagon Press Association, a membership organization representing the interests of the press corps covering the U.S. military, said the new rules appeared to be a "direct attack on the freedom of the press." "The decision is purportedly based on concerns about operational

security. But the Pentagon Press Corps has had access to non-secured, unclassified spaces in the Pentagon for decades, under Republican and Democratic administrations, including in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, without any concern about OP-SEC from DoD leadership," the statement said. The Pentagon did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment on the press association's statement. Since President Donald Trump returned to office in January, the Pentagon has launched an investigation into leaks that resulted in three officials being placed on administrative leave.

It has also required legacy media organizations, including the New York Times, the Washington Post, CNN and NBC News, to vacate their Pentagon office spaces in a new rotation system that brought in others, including outlets generally friendly to the Trump administration such as the New York Post, Breitbart, the Daily Caller and One America News Network. The Trump administration says the move is intended to allow other media outlets the opportunity to report as resident members of the press corps. More broadly, the Trump administration has deployed lie detector tests to investigate unclassified leaks, with some Department of Homeland Security officials being told they could be fired for refusing polygraphs, Reuters reported on Friday (May 23, 2025).

The White House says Mr. Trump will not tolerate leaks to the media and that federal employees who do so should be held accountable. Mr. Hegseth's Friday (May 23, 2025) order also requires members of the Pentagon press corps to acknowledge a responsibility to protect national intelligence and sensitive information, and says they will be issued with new credentials that more prominently identify them as members of the press. "We also anticipate a forthcoming announcement of additional security measures and enhanced scrutiny on the issuance of (credentials)," the memo said.

Engaging with U.S., China honestly a key priority, says Singapore PM Wong

News Agency, May 29

A key priority for Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong will be to deepen the trade-focused country's relations with the major powers, especially the U.S. and China, engaging with them honestly in a principled manner while not getting caught in their rivalry. Speaking after his newly re-elected government was sworn-in on Friday (May 23, 2025), Mr. Wong stressed, "Where our interests align, we will work with them (the US and China). Where they do not, we will stand firm and protect Singapore's security and sovereignty." He also added that the first priority would be to secure an "assured place" for Singapore in this "changed world".

Singapore, said Mr. Wong, will also seek new ties with countries in parts of the world, like Africa and South America, where it does not have much presence yet. "In a world of shifting alliances, we will be a steady and constructive partner, one willing and able to contribute to peace and stability, to advance dialogue and fraternity, and support a rules-based global order," he said. "Our goal is not just to navigate this uncertain world, but to help shape it for the better, by working with like-minded partners, and upholding shared principles and values, so that small nations too have a place under the sun," he said. The country's economic strategies will be reviewed and updated for the new landscape, he said, adding that the government will develop "a new economic blueprint for our next phase" to sustain Singapore's competitive edge and create good jobs for Singaporeans.

It will also help businesses, households and workers "weather the storm" as global growth slows in the near term, added 52-year-old Mr. Wong, who secured a landslide win



in the May 3 general election. Mr. Wong's first electoral outing as head of the country's fourth-generation leadership saw the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) taking 87 out of 97 seats in the country's 15th Parliament. Mr. Wong noted that when issues of race and religion surfaced in the recent election, "we did not allow them to divide us", a sign of how far multi-ethnic Singapore has come as a society, and a reminder that racial and religious harmony cannot be taken for granted. The government will also prepare Singapore for the future, particularly in speeding up the transition to cleaner energy and adapting to the realities of climate change, he said. "The international community and investors would have taken note of these outcomes. They would see a nation that is united, standing firmly behind its leaders, and placing confidence in a government with the strength and security to secure Singapore's place in an unpredictable world," he said. President Tharman Shanmugaratnam presided over the swearing-in ceremony of Singapore's new Cabinet at the Istana (Presidential Palace).

Kyiv comes under large-scale Russian drone and missile attack; explosions heard throughout city

GNS News Agency, May 29

Ukraine's capital Kyiv came under a large-scale Russian drone and missile attack early Saturday (May 24, 2025) with explosions and machine gun fire heard throughout the city, forcing many Kyiv residents to take shelter in underground subway stations. The nighttime Russian attack came hours after Russia and Ukraine began a major prisoner exchange, swapping hundreds of soldiers and civilians in the first phase of an exchange that was agreed on by the two sides at a meeting in Istanbul last week. The agreement was a moment of cooperation in otherwise failed efforts to reach a ceasefire in the three-year-old war. The debris of intercepted missiles and drones fell in at least four city districts of the capital early Saturday (May 24, 2025), acting head of Kyiv military administration, Tymur Tkachenko, wrote on Telegram. According to Mr. Tkachenko, six people required medical care after the attack, two fires sparked at Solomianskyi district of Kyiv.

Prior to the attack, city mayor Vitalii Klitschko warned Kyiv residents of more than 20 Russian strike drones heading towards Kyiv. As the attack continued, he said drone debris fell on a shopping mall and a residential building in Obolon district of Kyiv. Emergency services were headed to the site, Mr. Klitschko said. The prisoners swap Friday (May 23, 2025) was the first phase of a complicated swap involving the exchange of 1,000 prisoners from each side. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the first phase brought home 390 Ukrainians, with further releases expected over the weekend that will make it the largest swap of the war. Russia's Defence Ministry said it received the same number from Ukraine. As the freed men entered the



medical facility Friday (May 23, 2025), people holding signs and photos of their relatives shouted names or brigade numbers, seeking any news of a loved one. The returning men inspected the photos, and a serviceman said he shared a cell with one of those on the sea of portraits held out toward him. "Vanya!" cried Natalia Mosych, among the gathered relatives, "My husband!" She hadn't seen her husband, Ivan, for almost two years, she said, beaming. "It is an unbelievable feeling. I am still in shock," Mosych said after he came outside to greet his family following registration procedures inside the facility. "I am really glad, and we were not forgotten, and we still mean something for Ukraine." The exchange, which would be the latest of dozens of swaps since the war began and the biggest involving Ukrainian civilians at one time, didn't herald any halt in fighting. Battles also continued along the roughly 1,000-kilometer front line, where tens of thousands of soldiers have been killed, and neither country has relented in its deep strikes.

Microsoft fires employee who interrupted event to protest AI tech for Israeli military

Microsoft has fired an employee who interrupted a speech by CEO Satya Nadella to protest the company's work supplying the Israeli military with technology used for the war in Gaza. Software engineer Joe Lopez could be heard shouting at Nadella in the opening minutes Monday of the tech giant's annual Build developer conference in Seattle before getting escorted out of the room. Lopez later sent a mass email to colleagues disputing the company's claims about how its Azure cloud computing platform is used in Gaza. Lopez's outburst was the first of several pro-Palestinian disruptions at the event that drew thousands of software developers to the Seattle Convention Center. At least three talks by executives were disrupted, the company even briefly cut the audio of one livestreamed event.

Protesters also gathered outside the venue. Microsoft has previously fired employees who protested company events over its work in Israel, including at its 50th anniversary party in April. Microsoft acknowledged last week that it provided AI services to the Israeli military for the war in Gaza but said it had found no evidence to date that its Azure platform and AI technologies were used to target or harm people in Gaza. The advocacy group No Azure for Apartheid, led by employees and ex-employees, says Lopez received a termination letter after his Monday protest but couldn't open it. The group also says the company has blocked internal emails that mention words including "Palestine" and "Gaza." "Microsoft hasn't returned emailed requests for comment about its response to this week's protests. The four-day conference ends."

Is establishing the truth a problem during a conflict?



Pratik Sinha: What I have seen over the last few years is that while there may be some amounts of misinformation happening unknowingly, most of it is fairly strategised across multiple layers. The communication strategy also depends on who needs to set the narrative. On day one (of Operation Sindoor), when the strikes happened, there were videos from Pakistan, even before we all woke up, of people being injured and of broken buildings. Compare this to 2019 when the Balakot strikes happened. Some (in India) claimed then that (a former Pakistani diplomat had stated that) 3000 terrorists had been killed in the strikes (but his comments were misreported). Not one image of an injured or dead person was spread then. But this time, it was Pakistan which got into the race of narrative-building first, because it was Pakistan which felt the need to set a narrative. On day two, things started to change. In India, when propaganda happens, it is not just on social media; many mainstream media channels said that we have attacked Karachi port or reached Islamabad. Then social media began amplifying that by saying we have gone far inside Karachi. By day three, there was just a crazy amount of misinformation on Indian social media and (sections of) the mainstream media. When someone says Karachi port has been attacked, no one in Karachi is watching this because Indian channels are blocked there; it is Indian viewers who are reacting to

During Operation Sindoor, X announced that it had received orders from the Union government to block some 8,000 accounts in India, including those of news organisations and prominent X users. How can the public hope to understand any issue when differing viewpoints are suppressed? Pratik Sinha: The simple answer is that we cannot and the reason for blocking is that we should only get a selective view. This has been in the making for a very long time. It's just that during this conflict, we saw an extreme version of it. For example, Hindutva Watch, which does critical work in documenting hate crimes and hate speech, has been blocked in India for the longest time. Conflict time makes it convenient to suppress criticism. Under the garb of nationalism, anyone who is critical is being termed anti-national. The Indian media is in a time of crisis. I'm talking about the entire ecosystem, which includes social media, YouTube, and all other platforms. The way our Foreign Secretary got trolled depicts what we have become as a society. And on top of that, there is no access to well-rounded information. Nirupama Subramanian: To imagine that by blocking people on X you block out news completely is absurd. Yes, you may block out some actors, but the fact that India suffered some losses was in every respectable news report across the world. There was no way that the government could control all that. There is a limit to which it can control the narrative; it can't control it entirely.

Low sodium salt substitutes yet to take off in city

The World Health Organisation's Department of Nutrition and Food Safety had, in January, launched new guidelines on the use of salt with lower sodium content. Normal salt is a combination of sodium and chloride. Low sodium salt substitutes (LSSS) was advocated to reduce blood pressure and risk of cardiovascular diseases. The alternative generally used is potassium chloride. WHO has recommended reducing sodium intake to less than 2 grams/day. It also suggested

replacing sodium with potassium but with cautions that potassium cannot be used by pregnant women, children, and those with kidney impairment. Rajan Ravichandran, nephrologist who is attached to MIOT Hospitals, and has been advocating salt reduction for several years says: "About 50% of supermarkets sell low sodium salts. Black salt, Himalayan salt, sendanamak, rock salt and indupur are not true low sodium salt substitutes. They contain 90% to 95% sodium with additional magnesium

Medical College. She calls for better literacy among the people and pointed out that the Amma low sodium salt that was sold at ₹10 per kg was discontinued for want of awareness among the public. She suggests using naturally available taste enhancers such as powders of herbs and spices; citrus juices and vinegar; umami-flavoured ingredients such as nutritional yeast which is low in sodium, tomato paste and dried or powdered mushrooms; celery seeds that have a naturally salty flavour and dried seaweed (in moderation).

A taste of Kerala in Hyderabad: stores that bring home closer

Why is India not exercising enough and why this needs to change



In different corners of Hyderabad, about 80 Kerala stores are doing something special: helping over five lakh Malayalis in the city feel a little closer to home. For them, these shops don't just sell groceries; they bring back memories, traditions and the warmth of home.Walk into one, and you'll likely find banana chips, tapioca, coconut oil and pappadam. For many Malayalis residing in Hyderabad, these simple items are deeply personal—reminders of family, festivals and meals from childhood.“People come in and smile when they see the tapioca or smell the chips. It's not just food, its an emotion,” says Raghunathan, who runs ‘New Kerala Stores’ in Uppal. He came to Hyderabad from Thiruvananthapuram in 1985, looking for a job. He worked as an engineer and is now active in social work. The store is a side business that he runs with his wife. “We’ve been doing this for five years now,” he says. “We make the banana chips ourselves; Malayalis say they taste just like the ones back home.”Wholesale of Kerala products

Most Kerala stores in Hyderabad get their products from one person: Pradeep. Now based in Fateh Nagar, he came to Hyderabad from Kannur in Kerala in 1990, hoping to join the Army. When that didn't work out, he started a small shop at the Monda Market in Secunderabad. By 2010, he developed it into a wholesale establishment, which now supplies over 50 Kerala stores, hotels and even supermarkets.“Malayalis mostly buy chips and pappadam,” says Pradeep. “People also ask for tapioca, pickles and other items they grew up with.” Pradeep is more than a businessman. Like many others in this community, he is deeply involved in Malayali cultural associations like Thanal Maram.

One of the oldest Kerala stores in the city is run by

Pushpachandran, having opened his in Fateh Nagar in 1997. He came to visit his brother-in-law in Hyderabad. “He gave me the idea to start a Kerala store,” Pushpachandran says. “At first, business was dull. But slowly, more Malayalis began coming, and sales picked up.” Another long-time shop owner is Santhosh from Palakkad, who runs ‘Devi Kerala Stores’ in Safilguda. He started his business in 2000 and still runs it alone. “Most people come for tapioca and banana,” he opines.For Binoy, who was born and brought up in Hyderabad but whose native is in Kozhikode, these stores help him feel connected to his culture. “I always buy nendran banana, coconut oil, chips and pickles,” he says. “I even introduced some of my non-Malayali friends to the shop. One of them now loves ‘Kanan Devan’ tea and chips.”

In Picket, Secunderabad, there's a more modern Kerala store called ‘Achoos’, run by Parthasarathy, who is originally from Thrissur. An MBA holder, he worked in multinational companies in Chennai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad before deciding to start his own business in 2009.“I wanted to do something meaningful,” he says. “Something that connects with who I am. This shop does that.” He brings products from Kodungallur in Kerala and also offers online delivery. Most of his customers are Malayalis, but others come in too, often curious to try Kerala snacks. Varghese, originally from Thiruvalla, is a regular customer at Achoos. “I usually come for coconut, pappadam, idiyappam and Kerala rice,” he says. “It's part of my routine now.”Despite their different journeys, all these shop owners have something in common: they are keeping Kerala's taste and spirit alive in a big city. For the Malayali community, these stores offer more than just products. They offer comfort, a place to speak Malayalam and reminder that home can be just around the corner, no matter where you are.

Introspecting counter-terrorism after Operation Sindoor



The Pahalgam terror strike, on April 22, 2025, perpetrated by Pakistan proxies, and India's retribution through Operation Sindoor, on May 7, 2025, have fundamentally altered the security landscape of the region. While Operation Sindoor represents an undeniable tactical and operational success, its strategic efficacy in diminishing the long-term terrorist threat remains uncertain. At present, the discourses across all the forums in the country, unfortunately centre exclusively on matters of foreign policy and the external application of military force. The aspects concerning internalisation of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) have often been given a miss, thereby missing the wood for the trees. Here, it is crucial to understand that in the overall context, it has always been about winning Kashmir rather than defeating Pakistan.The complex reality of terrorism in J&K

It is beyond any doubt that Pakistan bears substantial accountability for the security situation in J&K, since Independence. After exploding in 1989, the security landscape was transformed from predominantly indigenous insurgency to significant participation of foreign terrorists, around the mid-1990s. Notwithstanding the foreign terrorists, a long-term analyses of patterns of terrorism reveal that local dynamics related to identity, marginalisation, repression and political disenfranchisement have played pivotal roles. These factors have given Pakistan the fuel to foment trouble. The interplay between external sponsorship and internal vulnerabilities creates a complex ecosystem of terrorism that defies simplistic military solutions, internally or externally.

Since 1989, the security forces have achieved substantial progress in J&K. As in South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) data, overall fatalities have reduced from over 4,000 lives in 2001 to 127 in 2024. This achievement stems from the consolidation of the security grid, the government's outreach to local populations and Pakistan's diminishing capacity to wage a high-intensity proxy war. This positive trajectory suggests that India's multifaceted approach has yielded tangible results, even as significant challenges remain and more needs to be done in the context.

Detering PakistanAnalysing terror-related fatalities in J&K over the last decade shows that kinetic actions such as surgical strikes (2016) and the Balakot aerial strike (2019) have not deterred Pakistan. SATP data show that fatalities went up to 267 in 2016 from 175 in 2015 and continued to rise through 2019. Even after the Kargil victory (1999), terror indices in the region shot up to an all time high. In Operation Sindoor, although our military actions ascended several notches above the surgical strikes or Balakot, these may still not deter Pakistan.Pahalgam terror attack: A tribute to the victimsThe government of Pakistan and the Pakistani people claim that they won the 100 hours war, from May 7 to 10. Pakistan's General Asim Munir has been elevated to the rank of Field Marshal and according to Ayesha Siddiqua, a Pakistani political scientist, military nationalism

has been revived in Pakistan. Detering Pakistan in the present circumstances seems ambitious. The participation of local terrorists in J&K, at present, is very low in contrast to the Burhan Wani days. Even though foreign terrorists are now technologically savvy and are relatively less dependent on local terrorists, the role played by local terrorists cannot be underestimated. Amid heightened security concerns following the Pahalgam attack, intelligence agencies have identified scores of local terrorists with links to their foreign counterparts.The voids in the security grid in the Jammu region, caused by troops being moved to Galwan, were exploited by terrorist cadres in new groups such as The Resistance Front, the People's Anti-Fascist Front, and the Kashmir Tigers, to name a few. The deteriorating security situation in the Jammu region has been marked by a kill ratio that favours the terrorists. What is worrying is the prevalent degree of local support for the terrorists. Human intelligence, or HUMINT, seems to have dried up, which explains the sustenance of terrorists (this includes the perpetrators of Pahalgam, who continue to be at large).Beyond kinetic operations

Government launches ‘Financial Fraud Risk Indicator’ to safeguard mobile users

New Delhi: In a key step towards combating cyber fraud and financial crime via mobiles, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) on Wednesday announced sharing of “Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI)” with its stakeholders.The multi-dimensional analytical tool, developed as part of the Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP), empowers financial institutions with advanced actionable intelligence for cyber fraud prevention.

This will enhance cyber protection and validation checks in case of mobile numbers flagged with this tool when digital payment is proposed to be made to such numbers, said the Ministry of Communications.It is a risk-based metric that classifies a mobile number as having been associated with Medium, High, or Very High risk of financial fraud.

Leading UPI platforms — PhonePe, Paytm, and Google Pay, which collectively account for over 90 per cent of UPI transactions — have begun integrating DIP alerts into their systems.“One of the leading UPI platforms has introduced transaction delays, with alerts and needing user confirmations. Other banks are also actively using the data for mitigating cyber fraud,” said the Ministry.With UPI being the most preferred payment method across India, this intervention could save millions of citizens from falling prey to cyber fraud. The FRI allows for swift, targeted, and collaborative action against suspected fraud in both telecom and financial domains.The Digital Intelligence Unit (DIU) of DoT regularly shares the list of mobile numbers that were disconnected, with stakeholders, along with the reasons for disconnections — found involved in cybercrime, failed re-verification and exceeding prescribed limits. These numbers are also usually used for financial fraud.As soon as a suspected mobile number is flagged by a stakeholder, it undergoes multi-dimensional analysis and is classified into Medium, High, or Very High financial risk associated with it. It then shares this assessment about the number immediately with all stakeholders through DIP.

To understand why exercise is not something we, in India, have embraced and made part of our everyday lives, we need to look back to our past. India is a country with a long, rich and deep history. For hundreds of years, we lived simple yet strong lives. Most people's days involved doing physical labour in the form of chores, tasks or work, eating whatever was cultivated or produced in the surrounding regions, engaging in social interactions, and relying on nature to protect and nourish. For the longest time, even up until a few decades ago, the average Indian's life ran more or less along these lines. As a result, exercise was simply not something we prioritised. We did not have to.

Our days were filled with enough physical tasks that required us to move our limbs and use our muscles regularly. Our lives were hard enough that they demanded a lot of walking and load-bearing activities. Our food was simple and well-portioned, so we did not need to 'burn it off'.

While different forms of 'exercise' such as wrestling, mudgar swinging, kalaripayattu, yoga and more existed, these were not considered activities that the everyday person must engage in. There were coaches, gymnasiums, schools and students, but the common person, thanks to how difficult life was back then, was active enough (and busy enough) to not require such exercise, daily, for general health. Similarly, dance and sports were art forms. There were enthusiasts and specialists who trained for excellence and spent hours practising every day for years on end. But, again, these were specialised skills and not everyday activities. Participation was not mandatory or even strongly recommended. The everyday person had other problems to deal with and other activities that took up their time and energy on a daily basis. In other words, life was hard, and hence everyday living kept us occupied with little time left for self-care.

Now, what does this have to do with well-being? For any person to look, feel and function well, we need three fundamental things - food, activity and rest. Food is how we procure energy and nutrients. Activity is how we keep our bodies stimulated and functioning well. And rest is how we rebuild, recover and recuperate. As evolutionary beings, we need all three of these in optimal amounts to thrive. Back in the day, we did get all three. But while we had to find ways to procure food and find time to rest, activity was just a natural part of life. We did not have to find opportunities to be active like we do today as everything in life required movement. In the absence of machinery and technology, procuring food, cooking, visiting friends and family, sourcing water, commuting, travelling, cleaning - pretty much every aspect of living required movement. As a result, 'exercise', as we know it today, was blended into daily life. Add to this, food scarcity, minimal variety, the general lack of processed high-calorie foods, inaccessibility to easy entertainment and constant distraction, and we have ourselves a situation where we are moving maximally, eating minimally and resting optimally. In such a scenario, there was simply no need for exercise.

Without sufficient movement, our joint mobility, blood circulation, posture, body weight, heart health and energy levels are all affected. Photograph used for representational purposes onlyOur bodies are designed to move: Today, an average adult living in a city walks just about 2,000 to 3,000 steps per day. This works out to just about 30 minutes of walking every 24 hours. While most of what we need to do in a day (chores, tasks, work, etc.) can be achieved with this, our bodies are designed to move and need more activity. Without sufficient movement, our joint mobility, blood circulation, posture, body weight, heart health and energy levels are all affected. Increasing the number of steps we walk is one of the simplest ways to improve health. And since we do not have a real reason to walk anymore, it becomes all the more important to create time to walk every day.

Multi-joint, multi-planar movement is necessary: While walking helps, our bodies are made up of multiple joints and muscles that are meant to move in different planes. While earlier, we had opportunities to use all of these joints and muscles and move in different planes and at different speeds, today, a structured exercise programme is the only way for us to ensure we give the body the optimal movement it needs. Energy and weight management: With an abundance of food around us and the convenience with which we can procure it, energy management has become vital. Consistently consuming more energy and expending less have resulted in creating an energy surplus in our bodies. This surplus has, in turn, resulted in consistent weight gain leading to obesity which could lead to other metabolic conditions such as insulin sensitivity, cardiovascular diseases, high blood pressure, breathing difficulties and musculoskeletal disorders. One way to address this energy surplus is by expending more energy. And the only way this can be achieved is by doing physical activities. Metabolic health: This is our body's ability to process food to fuel and use it efficiently to work, repair cells and store excess energy, and is a critical part of well-being. And regular exercise is the simplest and most effective way to improve one's metabolic health. Exercise significantly improves metabolic health by improving insulin sensitivity, regulating blood sugar levels, improving lipid profiles (lowering LDL, raising HDL), reducing body fat, and positively impacting the function of organs such as the liver and pancreas, all of which help in lowering the risk of chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.

Basal metabolic rate: While regular walking and endurance exercises can help in increasing our energy expenditure in the short-term, in the long-term, the smartest way to consistently increase energy expenditure is by increasing our basal metabolic rate (BMR). A person's basal metabolic rate is the amount of energy burnt throughout the day excluding the energy they burn through exercise and activities of daily life. The most effective way to increase one's BMR is by building more muscle. Compared to fat, muscle is more



While parents stress the importance of education and health, exercise somehow slips through the cracks. It does not even garner the importance that eating vegetables does. Parents do not model behaviour by exercising or trying to stay fit, and playing a sport is considered a waste of time after a certain age. Unless a child or person is clinically unwell or extremely overweight, going to the gym or playing a sport is not something that is commonly encouraged.

In educational structures too, exercise is not considered a priority. Other than a couple of PT periods per week (that most children promptly use to do homework or eat snacks), there is quite literally no focus on exercise or movement. You would think, that in schools where students are expected to sit (in suboptimal postures) for six hours or more every day, there would be a few minutes of basic movement every hour. But you would be wrong. Such is the state of movement in our schools, colleges and universities today. This is not unconnected to the general mindset of 'education is more important than movement' that arises from the familial structures that precede educational structures in a child's life. To add to this, schools and teachers do not do much to change this mindset even though children spend most of their time in educational institutions. In political structures too, exercise is not considered a priority. Parks, walking trails, gyms, sporting arenas and other outdoor recreational spaces that promote exercise are not easy to find in places other than metropolitan cities. Even when installed, they are not showcased and maintained well leaving them inaccessible to the everyday person. Governments tend to care more about healthcare and less about fitness. And that means governments are more intent on curing ailments and not preventing them. While cure might be the need of the hour, what we need to remember is that chronic metabolic diseases, which are a direct result of lifestyle factors such as movement and nutrition, contribute to more ailments than infectious diseases by a huge margin.

Without sufficient movement, our joint mobility, blood circulation, posture, body weight, heart health and energy levels are all affected. Photograph used for representational purposes onlyOur bodies are designed to move: Today, an average adult living in a city walks just about 2,000 to 3,000 steps per day. This works out to just about 30 minutes of walking every 24 hours. While most of what we need to do in a day (chores, tasks, work, etc.) can be achieved with this, our bodies are designed to move and need more activity. Without sufficient movement, our joint mobility, blood circulation, posture, body weight, heart health and energy levels are all affected. Increasing the number of steps we walk is one of the simplest ways to improve health. And since we do not have a real reason to walk anymore, it becomes all the more important to create time to walk every day.

Antarctica hides a vast mountain range beneath its ice

Sydney: Have you ever imagined what Antarctica looks like beneath its thick blanket of ice? Hidden below are rugged mountains, valleys, hills and plains. Some peaks, like the towering Transantarctic Mountains, rise above the ice.But others, like the mysterious and ancient Gamburtsev Subglacial Mountains in the middle of East Antarctica, are completely buried. The Gamburtsev Mountains are similar in scale and shape to the European Alps. But we can't see them because the high alpine peaks and deep glacial valleys are entombed beneath kilometres of ice.

Typically, a mountain range will rise in places where two tectonic plates clash with each other. But East Antarctica has been tectonically stable for millions of years. A new study, published in Earth and Planetary Science Letters, reveals how this hidden mountain chain emerged more than 500 million years ago when the supercontinent Gondwana formed from colliding tectonic plates.

The findings offer fresh insight into how mountains and continents evolve over geological time. They also help explain why Antarctica's interior has remained remarkably stable for hundreds of millions of years. A buried secret The Gamburtsev Mountains are buried beneath the highest point of the East Antarctica ice sheet. They were first discovered by a Soviet expedition using seismic techniques in 1958.Because the mountain range is completely covered in ice, it's one of the least understood tectonic features on Earth. For scientists, it's deeply puzzling.

Why Trump’s escalating war on Harvard, other US universities could progressively dent American academic leadership, impact economy



A legal reprieve notwithstanding, US President Donald Trump’s escalating attacks on educational institutions such as Harvard University and the targeting of foreign student could be “a prescription for failure”.

The revocation of Harvard’s certification to host international students on Thursday left thousands of students in the lurch. And while students and the Ivy League university, both, face concerns ranging from transferring to another institution to financial pain due to blocked government grants, the US economy will face a blowback too, especially if the Trump administration’s crackdown spreads to other elite academic institutions. The number of international students at Harvard steadily increased to 6,793 in the 2024-25 academic year from 3,941 in 2006-07, accounting for over 27 per cent of total enrollments currently, as per data from the university. Of course, the numbers are even larger if one looks beyond Harvard.

In 2023-24, the number of international students in the US in higher education rose to 11.3 lakh, making up 5.9 per cent of total US enrollment of 1.89 crore, according to the Open Doors 2004 report, published in November 2024 by the US Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the Institute of International Education. Harvard, as it turns out, did not even rank in the top-25 institutions in terms of international students, with New York University topping the list with 27,247 overseas students. India, with 3.32 lakh international students in the US, was the top-sending country for the first time since 2009. On Friday, Harvard sued the Trump administration for blocking the enrollment of international students – who it said “contribute significantly to the University and its mission” – and won a temporary restraining order against the government’s decision to revoke its certification. As the University petitioned in its lawsuit, “with the stroke of a pen, the government has sought to erase a quarter of Harvard’s student body.” International students in US higher education institutions now account for 5.9 per cent of total enrollments. Source: Institute of International Education (Data visualisation by Vibha B Madhava)Economic

Student remittances under LRS in FY2025 lowest in five years

Student remittances, Irs Student remittances, Student remittances under LRS, Liberalised Remittances Scheme, Reserve Bank of India, rbi, Indian express news, current affairsThe data shows a sharp decline of at least 25 per cent in Indian students receiving study permits across these key destinations in 2024.

IN WHAT MARKS the first decline since the Covid pandemic disrupted overseas travel and study plans of Indians, remittances by resident Indians under the Liberalised Remittances Scheme (LRS) of the Reserve Bank of India have declined by 6.84 per cent to \$29.56 billion in FY2025, down from \$31.74 billion in the previous year. The decline is largely attributed to a 16 per cent drop in funds remitted by students for studies abroad, which fell to \$2.92 billion in FY2025 from \$3.48 billion a year ago, according to RBI data. This trend is likely linked to many countries tightening student visa norms. Student remittances had peaked at \$4.98 billion in FY2019-20, just before the pandemic, when Indian students were flocking to foreign universities in large numbers.

Travel remittances also declined marginally to \$16.96 billion in FY2025 from \$17 billion last year. Despite the marginal decline, travel remittances have risen significantly over the past four years, growing by 144 per cent from \$6.95 billion in FY2020-21. This suggests that Indians are still keen on exploring international travel options, albeit at a slower pace. Interestingly, investment in equity and debt abroad by resident Indians rose 12.51 per cent to \$ 1.699 billion in FY25 as against \$ 1.51 billion in the previous year, RBI data shows.

Remittances for travel and studies abroad declined in the wake of a sharp fall in students going abroad. For the first time in four years, the number of Indian students heading to foreign universities has simultaneously declined across the top three destination countries — Canada, the US and the UK. The data shows a sharp decline of at least 25 per cent in Indian students receiving study permits across these key destinations in 2024. According to data from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), only 30,640 permits were issued to Indian students from January to March of this year, registering a 31 per

Apple to scale iPhone production in India to \$40 billion by FY26 amid shift from China

New Delhi: Apple is expected to ramp up its iPhone production in India to nearly \$40 billion (about Rs 3,36,000 crore) by the end of FY26, as the tech giant continues to shift its global supply chain away from China amid growing geopolitical tensions and trade tariffs. According to industry estimates, this move will enable Apple to meet 80 per cent of its iPhone demand in the US and cater fully to India’s growing domestic market.

The development comes close on the heels of Apple CEO Tim Cook’s statement during the company’s Q2 2025 earnings call, where he revealed that the majority of iPhones sold in the US in the current April-June quarter would be made in India. “For June, we do expect the majority of iPhones sold in the US will have India as their country of origin,” Cook said, citing reciprocal tariffs imposed by the US government that are reshaping production strategies. This pivot is a strategic response to the tariffs that are tied to the country of origin of products.

While China will continue to be the origin for most Apple products sold outside the US, India and Vietnam are emerging as key manufacturing hubs. For instance, almost all iPads, Macs, Apple Watches, and AirPods sold in the US will now come from Vietnam. Cook noted, Apple anticipates

contributionThe million-plus overseas students in American higher education institutions are also adding meaningfully to the economy. In the 2023-24 academic year, they contributed \$43.8 billion to the US economy and supported 3.78 lakh jobs, according to NAFSA: Association of International Educators, formerly known as National Association of Foreign Student Advisers. The economic activity total is the highest amount ever calculated by NAFSA, eclipsing the high-water mark of \$41 billion in 2018-2019 academic year,” the association said in November 2024, adding that for every three international students, one American job is either created or supported.

Emerging concernsAs it turns out, international students had begun to grow cold towards the US even before the Trump administration’s recent criticism of Harvard and policies that have cut back research and science funding. According to an analysis of Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) data by Chris R. Glass, a Professor of the Practice at Boston College’s Department of Educational Leadership and Higher Education, international student enrollments were down 11% year-on-year in March 2025. According to Glass, the fall in international student enrollments could represent “a more fundamental restructuring”, with the 11% decline potentially causing a \$4 billion hole in the pockets of US institutions.

Glass’ analysis showed the 11% downturn was led by a 28% fall in Indian students. had reported in December 2024 that the number of student visas issued to Indians in January-September 2024 were down 38% year-on-year. Others, too, have begun to voice concerns about the prospect of the US attracting fewer overseas students. Speaking at a tech summit in San Francisco earlier this week, renowned artificial intelligence researcher and Stanford University’s Sequoia Professor in the Computer Science Department, Fei-Fei Li, warned it was important the US remains a “magnet” for overseas talent and that the American higher education system continues to be nourished as it was critical to economic growth and innovation. “Closing yourself off from any group, and especially the 97% of the world’s population that lives outside the United States is a prescription for failure. Damaged universities mean less prosperity and fewer new ideas, ranging from the golf tee to Sesame Street to transplantation to stem cell cures for diabetes to so many more things that came from Harvard research. No small part of that contribution came from foreign scholars. All of that is at risk with these actions,” former Harvard University President Larry Summers, who has been a regular critic of his old university but has enthusiastically defended the educational institution after Trump’s recurrent attacks, said in a conversation with Politico .



cent drop from the same period in 2024. Moreover, according to travel industry sources, a good number of people dropped or postponed their travel plans as the global economy and markets faced volatile movements during the period. The Union Budget in February 2025 increased the threshold for collecting Tax Collected at Source (TCS) on LRS transactions from Rs 7 lakh to Rs 10 lakh. This change was expected to benefit the travel and foreign exchange sectors, providing a boost to outbound tourism, education and the airline sectors.

Under LRS, resident individuals, including minors, can freely remit up to US\$ 2,50,000 per financial year for permissible current or capital account transactions. These transactions include education, studies abroad, travel, medical treatment abroad, purchase of property, and investments in foreign stocks. Travel has emerged as the primary source of remittance outflow from India, accounting for over 57 per cent of total outflows at \$16.964 billion from just 1.5 per cent share in FY14. TCS is not an additional tax liability as people can claim a refund while filing income tax returns. As per the TCS rates under LRS proposed in the 2023-24 Budget, overseas tour package attracted TCS of 20 per cent from October 1, compared to 5 per cent. However, TCS will not be levied on credit card spending abroad. LRS remittance processed by the bank as an Authorised Dealer towards air travel ticket booking or hotel booking by a resident individual customer would be subject to TCS of 20 per cent above Rs 10 lakh, said a leading private bank.



a \$900 million impact from US tariffs in the current quarter, though the exact long-term implications remain uncertain. “We are not able to precisely estimate the impact of tariffs, as we are uncertain of potential future actions,” Cook added during the call. This shift also reflects Apple’s deepening investment in India’s electronics manufacturing sector, which has seen a remarkable boom under the government’s production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme. In FY25 so far, smartphones became India’s top export category, touching a record Rs 2 lakh crore in value.

Piano man Billy Joel’s rare brain disorder: Why we need to watch these symptoms in those above 60s



Singer-songwriter Billy Joel has said he has been diagnosed with a neurological condition that prevents him from performing for some time. He is suffering from normal pressure hydrocephalus (NPH), where the fluids inside your brain cavities are overproduced, cannot be absorbed and accumulate over time. This is a medical malady that is both under-recognised and frequently misinterpreted. Joel has cited disturbances in balance, hearing and vision.

What Is Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus?
At first glance, the term normal pressure hydrocephalus appears oxymoronic — how can a condition characterised by fluid accumulation in the brain occur under “normal” pressure? Your body makes just enough cerebro-spinal fluid (CSF) that nourishes the brain and spinal cord and can be absorbed. Here CSF is in excess and cannot be absorbed by the body. Hence it settles in the ventricles or chambers of the brain, enlarging them and compressing adjacent brain tissue. Yet the pressure within the skull remains seemingly within normal limits, thus eluding easy detection.
What about symptoms?
The condition manifests through a triad of symptoms that are as disruptive as they are subtle: Most patients have

trouble walking, develop balance problems and have falls. They complain of forgetfulness, confusion, depression and cannot follow questions.

What causes normal pressure hydrocephalus?
The normal flow of CSF throughout the brain and spinal cord gets blocked. This could be because of past injuries or bleeding, infection, brain tumor, or surgery. The extra fluid and pressure can lead to brain damage over time.

Why diagnosis is difficult?
It is difficult to diagnose this condition because its symptoms overlap with many other conditions. In older adults, diagnosis is difficult because it is assumed to be Alzheimer’s or Parkinson’s. Yet unlike these neurodegenerative conditions, normal pressure hydrocephalus is treatable. It can be diagnosed with neuroimaging, followed by a lumbar puncture that, if relieving symptoms even temporarily,

What about treatment?
Neurosurgeons implant a shunt under your scalp, a slender conduit that diverts excess fluid from the brain to the gut where it is absorbed. The shunt is inserted into the affected ventricle in the brain and then placed under your skin from your head through your neck and chest to your abdomen. When effective, the patient recovers quickly, regaining their cognitive and motor faculties. But it doesn’t work well with some patients and has limited benefits. Diuretics usually don’t work in this condition.

Why proper diagnosis matters
Cognitive decline is too often dismissed as an age-related problem and even treatable conditions are left undiagnosed. So if you see somebody’s steps faltering, their thoughts clouding, or their continence waning, do not dismiss it as an old age problem. It might just be a reversible neurological condition.

Is black coffee spiking your blood sugar? Here’s what staying up late, drinking cup after cup, does to you

Getting less than six hours of sleep regularly can interfere with your body’s ability to regulate blood sugar. Getting less than six hours of sleep regularly can interfere with your body’s ability to regulate blood sugar. A young patient of mine reported that her blood sugar levels were not quite in range despite keeping herself active and eating clean. We had suggested lifestyle correction as the first step to control her body weight but she said her regular exercises were tiring her out. Meanwhile her blood sugar levels showed an uptick. What was going wrong?

Then I asked her if she was sleeping enough. “Honestly, I sleep about five hours a night, sometimes less. I have a lot of daily deadlines to meet, so I rely on coffee — maybe five or six cups a day — to stay alert,” she told me. There lay my answer. Poor sleep and caffeine are bad news for blood sugar. Getting less than six hours of sleep regularly can interfere with your body’s ability to regulate blood sugar. Poor sleep stresses the body. This means your body produces more cortisol, a stress hormone. Cortisol makes it harder for the sugar-regulating hormone insulin to do its job, which means your blood sugar levels can rise. Even if your diet doesn’t change, sleep deprivation can push your blood glucose up. Your body becomes less sensitive to insulin, and your liver might release more glucose into the bloodstream thinking you’re in stress mode.

But isn’t black coffee good for diabetes?
Only in moderation. One or two cups a day usually don’t cause problems. But having five or six cups can backfire, especially when you’re not sleeping enough. High caffeine intake increases adrenaline and cortisol levels, just like lack of sleep does. Together, they create a double impact on your glucose control. So, caffeine indirectly raises



your blood sugar, too. Plus, excessive caffeine can lead to poor sleep quality — even if you do manage to get to bed on time. It becomes a cycle: less sleep, more coffee, more stress hormones, and higher blood sugar. Studies suggest that in some people, especially those with prediabetes or type 2 diabetes, high caffeine consumption can reduce insulin sensitivity. This means that their bodies require more insulin to bring blood sugar levels down after meals, putting extra strain on the pancreas and increasing the risk of hyperglycemia. Sleep is essential for glucose metabolism. And caffeine, though helpful in small doses, should be limited — especially if you’re using it to compensate for inadequate rest. Start by aiming for at least seven to eight hours of sleep per night. Try reducing your caffeine to two cups a day — preferably before 2 pm. Then monitor your blood sugar. You’ll likely see improvement within a week or two. These small lifestyle changes can go a long way in protecting your health — especially if you’re at a risk for diabetes or already managing it.

Are steroids, protein powders building muscle but damaging your hip bone? What young gym goers need to know



Can arbitrary use of gym steroids and protein powders damage the hip bone permanently? Orthopaedic experts are seeing hip bone damage and degeneration of the kind associated with the elderly among young people in their 20s, who may be picking up performance enhancers from gyms. Recently, the Maharashtra FDA also launched state-wide checks on protein powders after several brands were found to be spiked with performance-enhancing steroids, many of which are freely available online or at gyms without proper labelling or approvals.

According to Dr Gaurav Prakash Bhardwaj, Director, Sports Injury, Joint Preservation and Replacement Surgery, PSRI hospital, “Steroid use is one of the most well-documented causes of Avascular Necrosis (AVN), a condition where bone tissue dies because of lack of blood supply. When taken in high doses or over a long period, especially without medical need, steroids can interfere with the blood supply to the bone.”

What kind of hip-related complaints are you seeing among young patients?

There has been a noticeable rise in hip-related com-

plaints among young individuals, especially those in their 20s and early 30s. They report persistent pain in the hip joint, difficulty walking, or stiffness, all linked to unsupervised gym workouts and supplement use. Abuse of steroids can also impact liver and cardiovascular health.

How often are young patients diagnosed with AVN?
Earlier, AVN was considered relatively rare in this group, but in recent years, we are seeing around 3 to 5 cases per month in some urban hospitals alone. This number may vary depending on the location, but overall, there is a clear upward trend. Many patients are unaware that their symptoms could point to a serious condition until the damage becomes severe. Medication can slow down degeneration, surgery is the last resort.

How does alcohol and steroid use contribute to AVN among young adults?

Steroid use is one of the most well-documented causes of AVN. When taken in high doses or over a long period, especially without medical need, steroids can build up fat levels in the blood and bone marrow, obstructing blood vessels and interfering with blood supply to the bone.

How does Alcaraz trap Sinner in the backhand corner? Like Nadal used to do against Federer

GNS News Agency, May 29

This weekend, after 20 years, Rafael Nadal wouldn't be competing for the French Open title. Novak Djokovic will be there, but in a way, he too isn't in the competition to take the Cup home. At 38, he looks too jaded, too uninspired to win five-setters on clay against Carlos Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner, the 20-something stars ready to conquer the world. Generational shifts can take a toll on fans. It's tempting to get wishful about the end of tennis's golden age, entertain thoughts of staying aloof to the happenings at Roland Garros. It's also a guilt-ridden ordeal to switch loyalties, root for the new stars when the old ones are still around. But like market analysts love to say during every churn — it is always wise to stay invested.

The new crowd-pullers, Alcaraz and Sinner are still works in progress but there is a bit of the Biggest 3 in the current Top 2. Watch Alcaraz, and Sinner carefully to stumble upon a few snatches of the incredible era that has just passed us. When the two face-off — like they did in the Italian Open this week and a repeat is expected this French Open — there is a whiff of those many iconic duels that divided the world that felt lucky to have lived in the Age of GOATS. Not full-length blockbuster to match the classics, but reels and shorts. At Rome where Alcaraz won 7-6, 6-1, there were those fleeting moments that reminded of the cat & mouse hustle of Federer vs Nadal vs Djokovic match days. Alcaraz beating Sinner on his home ground wasn't a match for ages. Historically, the Spaniard has the Italian's number, he mostly gets the better of him. But it is not to say Sinner didn't have a chance or that his straight sets loss didn't have intrigue or promise of a riveting rivalry in the future. Not quite the teaser, it was more of a prequel before the French Open. Like it was on Italian clay last Sunday, when the two meet, rallies are expected to be on one side of the court — a series of backhand cross-courts by two hard-hitting right-handers stationed slightly on the left of the court. Both would try to press the other to hit a soft return probably around the mid-court so that they can unleash their big inside out forehand. Whoever manages to play percentage tennis — deep incisive shots on the rival's backhand — would be favourite to win. In Rome, Alcaraz did it and so he won. This trend was best captured by that one crucial point that decided the match. Sinner was a point away from taking the first set, he led 6-5, 40-30. This was the time when Alcaraz had to play percentage tennis and also be true to his Plan A.

The Spaniard hit a near perfect top-spinner on the backhand that landed close to baseline and he stood waiting for a lame return, expecting a defensive shot in mid-court that he could destroy. Sinner thought of attacking the ball and opted for a very difficult backhand down-the-line, one-knee jump backhand pass. Glory or nothing. He missed the line by a distance. If it was not clay, had it not been Alcaraz, Sinner might have been able to pull off the tough shot. But not against Alcaraz, when he is landing the ball where he wants — deep in the backhand corner. Whoever manages to play percentage tennis - deep incisive shots on the rival's backhand - would be favourite to win. In Rome, Alcaraz did it and so he won. This 'play' has history, it is part of a very important tennis culture. Like any self-respecting Spaniard, the boy from El Palmar who grew up on red-clay, banks on this



heavy top-spin ball to pin his opponents on the baseline. It's Spain's national clay-tactic from the days of Sergi Bruguera and later mastered by the Clay King himself, Nadal. Alcaraz's spin on the ball is nowhere near Nadal's whiplash forehand that would send the ball in a crazy tizzy but he does get a mean bounce. Nadal re-romanticised Federer's famous single-handed backhand with this tactic. He exploited the limitation of one wrist, forearm and shoulder to control and impart power to high top-spinners. The Swiss champion would always find it tough to bring the ball down that never stopped climbing on him. Later in his rivalry with Nadal, he would opt for a racket with a larger frame as he wanted a bigger sweet spot. Alcaraz's 'backhand heist' against Sinner is slightly different. At Rome, he would reduce the pace of his shot but made it a point to play them deep on Sinner's left. Once in a while, he would even float a moon ball. Alcaraz knows that in case he engages Sinner in fast backhand cross court rallies, he could be blown away. The Italian has power and consistency. But hitting the ball in slow parabolas, he can possibly disturb Sinner's rhythm and force him to generate his own power.

This results in unforced errors or feeble returns that can be despatched with ease. Hitting the ball consistently on the baseline has another advantage on clay. Since it's the court's most foot-stomped area, bounce also isn't consistent. There isn't an inch of clay court that the Spaniards don't know. What will always give Alcaraz an edge over Sinner on clay is his footwork and shot variety. The Spaniard has it in his tennis DNA to float around on clay, nor scamper around. He doesn't over-run the ball or stutter before hitting it. Sinner, on clay, does both at times. A problem that vanishes on hard courts. When in flow, Alcaraz makes his opponents look inadequate with his variety. The point with which he broke Sinner for the first tie in the second set showcased his arsenal. A flat hard first serve, few forehand cross courts, a moon ball on the backhand, deep slice on the forehand and finally the sucker punch. Having left the left side of the court vacant chasing the slice on the forehand, the Italian gets ready to sprint towards the backhand. Just as he takes off, Alcaraz, at the very last minute, decides to play his trademark audacious drop shot.

The ball drops dead close to the net, Sinner deflates at the baseline. Mind you, the points won and lost at the Rome finals didn't end with full stops, it was a comma and they came with 'to be continued' post-script. Rome gave an idea about what Paris could be and how future Alcaraz-Sinner clay encounters would unfold. The French Open wouldn't be what it used to be. The page has turned, characters replaced, storyline changed but the play has a 'seen this before' feel. It's new wine, new bottle but there is a strange aftertaste that seems all too familiar.

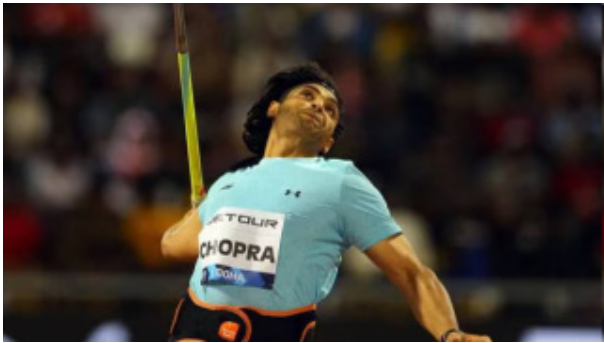
Neeraj Chopra finishes 2nd at Janusz Kusocinski Memorial: In testing conditions, Neeraj extends streak of top-two finishes to 22 events

GNS News Agency, May 29

Had things gone as planned, Neeraj Chopra would have been in India this weekend, celebrating the coming together of a dream he had to bring the top javelin throwers in the world to his own backyard. The NC Classic — an invitational men's javelin throw named after the Tokyo gold medalist himself — was originally scheduled to be held at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru on May 24, and a day ahead of it, he'd have been the center of attention in a first-of-its-kind event in India. However, after the event had to be postponed due to the recent India-Pakistan conflict, Neeraj found himself in chilly Chorzów, Poland at the Silesian Stadium, in conditions not ideal for javelin. And for a majority of the night, he struggled to come up with that one big throw, seemingly set to finish outside the top-two for the first time since June 2021. In the end, though, the Tokyo Olympic champion came up with a solid throw of 84.14m with his sixth and final attempt, and piped two-time former World Champion Anderson Peters at the finishing line, and sealed his second spot at the 71st Janusz Kusocinski Memorial. It meant that June 2021 — Kuortane Games in Finland — remains the last time Neeraj has finished outside second place, the run now extending to 25 (including qualification rounds).

The day belonged to Julian Weber, the German once again laying down the marker for the 2025 season as he threw past 80m with all his six attempts, the only athlete to cross 85m, and he did so thrice. Weber's 86.12m with his second attempt was the best of the night. Grenada's Peters finished third with his best throw of 83.24m off the third try. Coming into the event, Neeraj would have had fond memories of Poland. At the World U20 Championships in Bydgoszcz back in 2016, a young Neeraj shot into international limelight with 86.48m — a Junior World Record that still stands. Even before Paris 2024, he had said in an interview to JioCinema, "To date, I am only satisfied with one throw of mine, which was 86.48m at the Under 20 Worlds."

His return to Poland for the first time since then for a competitive event, Neeraj didn't quite seem to find his rhythm. When the throwers were introduced, Neeraj was decked up in his winter-wear in temperatures around 13 degrees Celsius, a far cry from the conditions last week in Doha at the Diamond League, where both Neeraj and Weber entered the 90m club in great conditions for throwing. After a first foul throw, with Weber and Peters already both crossing 80m with their attempts, Neeraj got on board with 81.28m with his second. That was followed by a couple more throws, and by this time Weber had already registered his 86.12 while Peters had improved to 83.24m as well. After his fourth throw was unsatisfactory, Neeraj — back in his winter jacket to stay warm — headed over to his coach (and world record holder) Jan Zelezny in the stands and had a quick chat. Whatever was discussed seemed to have helped Neeraj as he went up to 81.80 with his fifth attempt, till then his best of the day. It wasn't enough at that point to move him up the standings, but with his last throw, Neeraj came up with his best of the day, getting closer to that 85m marker. There wasn't too much of a celebration from the two-time Olympic medalist, as he shadowed his throwing motion while waiting for the official mark to come up. When it did,



he had done enough to keep up his streak at the very least. In the past Neeraj has spoken about how he considers consistency to be his biggest strength. A 90m+ throw didn't seem likely anyway from the word go, with only four men eventually clearing 80m in a field of 7 throwers who have gone past that mark. But he did what he had to, even on a frustrating night, ensuring he stays close to the top.

Nagaland makes history with Gold in Sepak Takraw at Khelo India Beach Games

GNS News Agency, May 29

Hyderabad: Nagaland created history in the Khelo India Beach Games sepak takraw winning the women's quad regu team gold in Diu. The top performance catapulted them to finish in the top three for the first time at any Khelo India games. Delhi beat Manipur to clinch gold in the men's quad regu team event.

Nagaland ended the KIBG 2025 on a high, finishing third with five gold, three silver and five bronze medals. Four of Nagaland's gold medals came from pencak silat. Only Manipur and Maharashtra, No. 1 and No. 2 in the medal standings had more silver medals. As the final whistle blew, there were jubiliations and celebrations across the Ghoghla beach, creating the perfect pre-weekend carnival. The Nagaland women's team battled nerves, strong resistance and brought in their A-game to pip Haryana 2-1 in a thrilling women's quad final. "It was a very dramatic match. Haryana were playing so well but luck favoured us and we got the job done," a jubilant Kethosituo Sekhose, Chef de Mission of Nagaland, told SAI Media. "This team will now prepare and hopefully some of them will get selected for the India team. The overall performance for Nagaland has been very nice. Almost everyone got a medal," he added. The Delhi men's team meanwhile won the quad regu final 2-0 with relative ease against Manipur, who became overall KIBG 2025 champions. A solid crowd gathered and cheered in every single rally during both the women's and men's sepak takraw quad finals. However, it was the thrilling women's final that mesmerized all present.

Kidambi Srikanth uses smart strategy to beat Popov, enters Malaysian Masters semis

GNS News Agency, May 29

Since the time when Kidambi Srikanth was 25 — and his 25th year was indeed memorable with four Tour titles in 2017 — defenses of men's singles shuttlers have improved exponentially. Six of eight quarter-finalists at the Malaysian Masters were under age 26, and the ruthless young brigade now, is bound to ask questions of his attacking game, that he hardly encountered back in the day. Toma Junior Popov, a combative French shuttler of Bulgarian heritage, ranked No.18 in the world, has an entrenched attacking game laced with tricks. But it's his stubborn retrieving defense that was wielding the power to neutralize the vintage Srikanth attacking game, which hasn't forgotten its sense of creativity and adventure even if he's ranked 65.

It was in countering Popov that Srikanth pulled out an auxiliary plan that his courtside coach Guru Saidutt had no inkling of, but which helped him win 24-22, 17-21, 22-20 making his first Super 500 semifinal since 2022. Srikanth is best known for his big smash, which is a set-up shot, and the follow-up kill where he stomps at the net and sends a push-kill on the opponent's body after he's reeling from having retrieved the big smash. On Friday at the famed Axiata Arena, Srikanth sent the Malaysian crowd into tizzing hysterics, with a third step counter, after Popov parried off the body shots. Wholly improvising after Popov started fending off the hits to his torso, Srikanth surprised by using the body attack as his set-up and followed the follow-up with a quick deep push to Popov's flanks immediately after.

The body smashes were often decoys and at other times scare tactics to pin Popov to the spot — keep him guessing, fearing and haunting his judgment. The tall French shuttler kept worrying if another of those body smashes was headed his way, even if none fetched the Indian any points. "The plan was to keep at the net, take the shuttle high and send lifts that would push Toma back. Srikanth surprised with the body shots," Guru laughed. He first surprised his own coach, and then the opponent. The Malaysians were riveted.

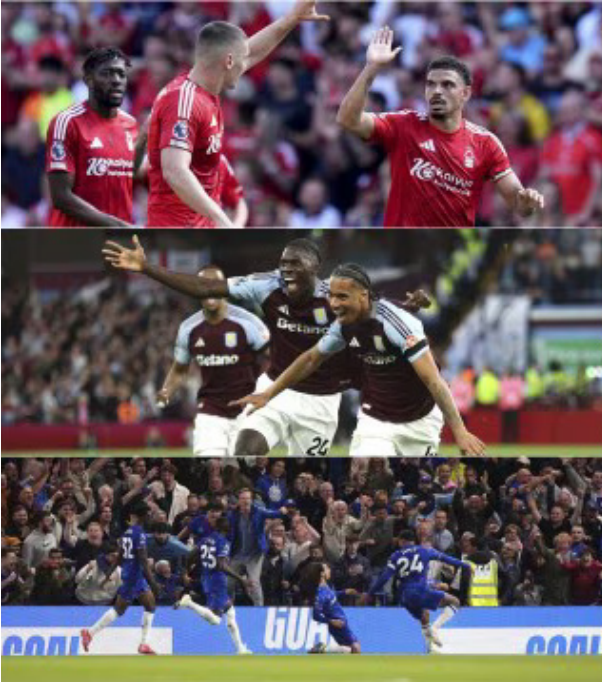
From 7-7 to 22-22, both shuttlers went neck and neck in the opener, and Srikanth showed pristine wristy-magic at 18-18 tapping the shuttle with a parallel racquet to the floor, sending it skimming to the opposite left front corner, from the right. To get the decisive edge at 23-22, Srikanth brought out the body attack and to win 24-22, the flank hit. Popov doesn't back off from taking his chances, and he led for most part in Set 2, winning it 21-17, as Srikanth couldn't pull away from 15-15. He even smashed one wide and looked like lapsing into old frittering habits. Rooted to a midcourt spot from where he tried to control the rally, there was a hint of passiveness even in his lifts as his 5th match in the week looked a familiar down spiral of errors. Deja vu and the opponent were both French. In the decider, Srikanth gave off the impression that he was fading out, trailing 7-11 in the third. "The shuttles were fast today and Srikanth took some time to adjust. It was not easy to control but we had a plan to send lifts to the back court," Guru said. Nailing those



was the part of execution that gave Srikanth the leeway to open up the court. Toma brought in the flat game in response — not unexpected, but tough to soak up the pressure of the speed. "Toma forced the drive exchanges, but Srikanth handled it well. The intensity was high and the pace was very hot. But Srikanth believed in himself," Guru explained, as the 32-year-old survived the onslaught from the younger rival who was making him play across his body testing his agility.

The Guntur pro, a former World No.1, has a cult following in almost every badminton outpost — clumps of fans in Indonesia, Denmark, Singapore, Japan and China who dig his stylish strokeplay, and indulge his losses, showering irrational gush on that one moment of magic, when his talent skyrockets. Malaysians are no different and at 19-17, he sent a whipped flat cross smash that zipped so quick, an entire stand of locals filed into the ground level to wait for his autograph. Three match points at 20-17 in the decider, and three errors promptly came out — a notorious variety to them, one going for the line, another dumped into the net. At 20-20, Toma had every reason to expect a Srikanth implosion that's happened dozens of times in the last three years. Guru sat tight, saying nothing, biting back advice because Srikanth had been in such flow. "He took risky chances at 20-17, but thankfully backed off at 20-20. I didn't say anything till then but at 20-20 after a blunder drop, told him to calm down, back off and revert to the plan which had worked so well." A cross court lift followed, and Popov was again pushed into the hazardous back court. He was bound to err from there, it only needed Srikanth to lure him out of position. His reward — semis at Malaysia, a rare venue where he hasn't won a title. Yushi Tanaka, a pacy runner and busy retriever with acrobatic reach, will fetch up next. The 25-year-old, ranked No.23 is coming off a good week of results, and like Srikanth was fending off the other Popov brother, Christo, for 69 minutes. "Tanaka beat Prannoy comfortably in Round 2. Tomorrow should be 50-50, but Srikanth stands a chance," Guru said. Plans will get drawn up, and then India's finest male shuttler, will sprinkle his own ideas, should his fitness hold and allow him a dash of creativity. Tanaka's speed is not easy to counter, but it's not often that Srikanth finds himself playing to a packed house on semi-final Saturdays these days.

What's at stake on Premier League's final day? Five-way battle for Champions League, Salah record and more



GNS News Agency, May 29

The Premier League title was decided well in advance in favour of Liverpool with Arsenal's push for the title falling by the wayside far too soon, the three promoted teams from last year were so woeful that there was no relegation race really (Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur fans will be grateful). So, two of the most thrilling aspects in any Premier League season usually were rendered largely uninteresting. But there is still a few interesting things to look forward to on the final day of the 2024-25 season in England's top flight, with the fight for lucrative European spots still up for grabs. Manchester City, Newcastle, Chelsea, Aston Villa and Nottingham Forest — are bidding for the remaining three Champions League qualification spots alongside already-crowned champions Liverpool, second-place Arsenal and Europa League winners Tottenham Hotspur, who enter the last day in a woeful 17th spot having lost 21 times this season. City frontrunners

Having endured their worst season under Pep Guardiola, the latest blow coming in the FA Cup final against Crystal Palace, City are in third place on 68 points, relatively comfortable in ensuring UCL football for next season. Fourth-place Newcastle, fifth-place Chelsea and sixth-place Villa have 66, and seventh-place Forest have 65. City are away to Fulham and, because of their superior goal difference (+26) compared to their rivals, know a draw is all but certain to secure a top-five finish. Indeed, Newcastle (+22) and Chelsea (+20) have a much better goal difference than Villa (+9) so are virtually sure of getting into the Champions League with victories. Chelsea have the toughest match — away to Forest — while Newcastle host Everton and Villa visit Manchester United, who are coming off losing the Europa League final. Forest must beat Chelsea and also need one of Newcastle and Villa to lose or draw their games to secure Champions League qualification. It would be a huge achievement, given Nuno Espirito Santo's team was fighting relegation last season. A very possible Forest win against Chelsea, who have struggled away from home, could be heartbreak for both teams.

Man City star Kevin De Bruyne heads the list of players bidding farewell to their teams on the final day. De Bruyne already had a big Etihad Stadium sendoff on Tuesday after the win over Bournemouth but this will be the last game in his 10-year career with City. Elsewhere, Trent Alexander-Arnold's goodbye to Liverpool hasn't been so celebrated by

some Reds fans unhappy at him leaving his boyhood team on a free transfer. His last game for Liverpool is against Crystal Palace at Anfield, and Liverpool manager Arne Slot said Friday he hasn't decided if Alexander-Arnold will start. He was also critical of the defender's attitude in training. There was mixed reception from the Anfield faithful when he came on as a sub against Arsenal. Others heading into the final games for their clubs include Victor Lindelof and Christian Eriksen (Man United), Jorginho and Kieran Tierney (Arsenal), Abdoulaye Doucoure (Everton) and Lukasz Fabianski (West Ham). On the managerial front, there's still plenty of speculation about the future of Tottenham manager Ange Postecoglou despite leading the team to the Europa League title. What he says — or how he behaves — after the home game against Brighton will be telling. It could also be Ruud van Nistelrooy's final game in charge of relegated Leicester. Liverpool's players will finally get their hands on the Premier League trophy after closing their title-winning campaign against Palace, the FA Cup winner — a dress rehearsal of sorts for the season-opening Community Shield in August. Mohamed Salah, who has 28 goals and 18 assists this season, heads to Anfield with a couple of records in sight. He is one goal or assist away from the Premier League's single-season goal contribution record of 47 — held jointly by now-retired strikers Alan Shearer and Andrew Cole —

We don't look too far ahead, says Salt

HYDERABAD: No one likes to lose games in cricket. We have qualified and we have lost a game. You can take it as a disappointment, says Phil Salt, the Royal Challengers Bengaluru opener after the team lost to Sunrisers Hyderabad in Lucknow on Friday night. "We're going to get an opportunity to pick the bones out of it and have a look. Things we did well and things we didn't do so well and come back. We've got one more group game and then head into the playoffs. Yeah, it's a funny one," Salt said in the post-match briefing. "Honestly, we qualify for the playoffs. Once you're into the playoffs, you have to go and play in a pretty carefree manner and do what you can to win the trophy. We're not too far ahead of ourselves at the moment with that thinking," Salt said.

Mukul Dev spoke about ‘dark forebodings’ in final Instagram post before death: ‘And if your head explodes...’



Actor-model Mukul Dev passed away on Friday, leaving the industry in shock. He remains best known for appearing in films such as Son of Sardaar, R...Rajkumar and Jai Ho, but there was something else Dev was highly passionate about: aviation. Even the last post on his Instagram is a video of him flying his plane over the clouds in peace.

The video was overlaid with a karaoke version of a song from Pink Floyd’s iconic album ‘The Dark Side of the Moon’. The caption of the post read, “And if your head ex-

plodes with dark forebodings too.... I’ll see you on the dark side of the moon,” which is part of the lyrics from the same song, “Brain Damage.”

Before he switched to acting and modelling, Mukul Dev completed his aviation training at the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Udaan Akademi in Raebareli. He even worked as a commercial pilot for nearly a decade and also ran an aeronautical training institute. He had talked about his journey as a pilot in an interview with Eastern Eye and said, “I was a pilot before I became an actor. So I will never forget clearing my flying academy exams and getting a scholarship to become a commercial pilot. I could not have asked for anything better.”

Fans of the actor flooded the comments section of the video and expressed their grief over his tragic death. One user wrote, “RIP, sir. One of the finest actors since the 90s,” while many users shared GIFs of crying with the message ‘Rest In Peace’. In an earlier post, he had posted a picture of a light aircraft, a Cessna. The caption read, “Echo November India. She gave me wings and taught me a few tricks in the skies.”Other stars such as Manoj Bajpayee, Vindu Dara Singh, and Deepshikha Nagpal have all shared emotional messages on their social media, showing their love for Dev. Vindu talked about Dev’s health in detail and told SCREEN that he had not been keeping well since his mother passed away and was almost in a state of depression.

Secrets We Keep review: Addictive and atmospheric, Netflix’s Nordic-noir mystery is another Adolescence in the making

Rules don’t apply to the rich in Secrets We Keep, the addictive new Nordic-noir series on Netflix. The six-episode thriller unfolds through the perspective of Cecelie, a young mother who lives along with her lawyer husband and their two children in a spectacular lakeside villa in Denmark. Her seemingly idyllic existence is upset by the disappearance of her neighbour Katarina’s au pair, a Filipino immigrant named Ruby. Only a day ago, Ruby had approached Cecelie in confidence, and had asked for her help in being extracted from Katarina’s home. Something was very wrong, Ruby said. Cecelie awkwardly avoided any trouble, and advised Ruby to raise any concerns that she might have with her employers. Little did she know that Ruby would go missing under mysterious circumstances mere hours later.

Cecelie is somewhat surprised to note how lackadaisical Katarina and her billionaire husband Rasmus are about raising the alarm. Ruby is an adult, they declare; she’s free to come and go as she pleases. Katarina, in particular, is upset that Ruby chose the beginning of the new school year to run away; she needs someone to handle her teenage son, Oskar. He’s attached at the hip with Cecelie’s son, Viggo, who’s a couple of years younger. Viggo is very obviously the submissive one in the relationship. Because of their years-long friendship, and the fact that their husbands are colleagues, Cecelie and Katarina often spend evenings together. They drink wine while their husbands discuss money. It’s all very patriarchal.

A slow-burn thriller that addresses class-disparity, toxic masculinity, and the exploitation of cheap labour, Secrets We Keep takes a rather familiar premise and transforms it into something entirely more complex. Cecelie is struck by a bout of white guilt as she immerses herself in Ruby’s disappearance. Certain that she saw a pregnancy test in Katarina’s garbage the night of Ruby’s disappearance, she puts two and two together and decides that Ruby must’ve been assaulted and impregnated by Katarina’s husband, Rasmus. Her own au pair, Angel, doesn’t seem to have any idea why Ruby vanished off the face of the earth. The Filipinos have their own community of sorts, and, having understood that they can’t count on their privileged employers to fully support them in their search for Ruby, they band together to solve the mystery themselves. Yes, there is a detective as well. Her name is Aicha, and she approaches the case with her own biases. Aicha is doubly oppressed; not only is she a woman, she’s also mixed-race. Like Cecelie, she’s convinced that Ruby couldn’t simply have run off on her own. She knows that something sinister is afoot, and that Rasmus, with his enormous wealth, is somehow involved. Midway through the series, a paranoid Cecelie begins viewing her own husband with suspicion. Damaging details about his past are unearthed, and their marriage hits rock bottom. She begins to ignore Viggo, a quiet child who’s clearly dealing with something.

Secrets We Keep ticks all the boxes; it’s culturally specific yet universal in its themes; a significant chunk of it



is set in the English language, which would hopefully encourage international audiences to avoid watching a dubbed version; it makes important observations about rather timely topics. The Danes might’ve deluded themselves into believing that au pairs are part of a sincere exchange programme to build cultural bridges, but it’s actually just an excuse to import cheap labour. In order to get the job, Angel lied about not having a child, which Cecelie sees as a gross betrayal. “I don’t want to keep a mother away from her child,” she says, pretending to care. Angel replies, “You have no idea about where I come from.”Cecelie wrestles with the idea of decency throughout the series. We are, of course, dealing with a particularly exaggerated form of decency here. What flies in India, for instance, wouldn’t in Denmark. But the show goes through great pains to expose insincere empathy. No matter how many times folks like Cecelie and Katarina insist that Angel and Ruby are ‘a part of the family’, the chasm between their two communities is so vast that they cannot even comprehend it. For instance, Cecelie appears to be shocked at the idea of a mother having to leave her child behind to go to work, but doesn’t recognise the irony of hiring an au pair to look after her own kids.The mystery at the centre of Secrets We Keep is engrossing, but the show wisely spends the time necessary to flesh out all the central characters. Towards the end, Secrets We Keep transforms into a sort of spiritual sequel to the recent Netflix breakout hit Adolescence. Enough clues are peppered throughout the show’s run about what’s going on under Cecelie and Katarina’s eyes, but they’re far too concerned about appearances to pay attention. Either covertly or overtly, not a single male character in the show is morally pure. Secrets We Keep ends on a memorable note; the climax isn’t just satisfying on a narrative level, but it’s fittingly austere departure from the sanitised storytelling that Netflix’s American and Indian offshoots regularly dole out.

Secrets We KeepCreator – Ingeborg TopsøeCast – Marie Bach ansen, Simon Sears, Excel Busano, Sara Fanta Traore, Danica Curcic

‘Pretty’ Manushi Chhillar likes to ‘build muscles’

Mumbai: Actress and former beauty queen Manushi Chhillar shared a glimpse of herself working out hard and building muscles.Manushi took to Instagram to share two striking pictures. In the first, she took a mirror selfie while seated on her yoga mat, with dumbbells and resistance bands placed beside her. The second photo highlighted her impressive core strength, capturing her mid-plank with perfect form.“Pretty little baby likes to build muscle... How long can you plank?” she wrote as the caption. On the professional front, Manushi Chhillar is gearing up for an exciting year with two big films coming soon. First is “Maalik,” a tough gangster drama where she stars opposite Rajkummar Rao. The movie shows Manushi in a completely new avatar.Directed by Pulkit and produced by Kumar Taurani and Jay Shewakramani, “Maalik” is scheduled to release on June 20, 2025.Her second film, “Tehran,” is a gripping geopolitical thriller based on real events. Manushi stars alongside John Abraham and sports a bold new look with cropped wavy hair and intense action scenes. Produced by Dinesh Vijan’s Maddock Films, the movie is expected to hit theatres later in 2025.The actress on May 19 shared a glimpse of her extraordinary birthday celebration, which spanned more than 33 hours across time zones.

She revealed that jet lag took a backseat as she



indulged in back-to-back cake-cutting sessions—complete with a special baklava—and basked in the love and surprises planned by her closest friends.Manushi wrote, “

Tom Cruise’s co-star Hayley Atwell was eight months pregnant while filming fight scene in Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning



In the eighth and reportedly final instalment of the Tom Cruise-led Mission: Impossible series, titled The Final Reckoning, Hayley Atwell reprised her role as Grace. Hayley’s character was first introduced in Dead Reckoning Part One as a former thief who becomes an IMF recruit in the Ethan Hunt-led team. But as she bids farewell to her role in the popular franchise, the actor has stepped into a new role—motherhood. Up until now, Hayley had kept it all under wraps, but during a recent appearance on The Jimmy Fallon Show, she revealed filming a fight sequence while pregnant.

“During this fight sequence, we came back to it a few times to add a few elements to it,” the 43-year-old said, right before the host played a clip from the movie. “In this clip, I’m actually eight and a half months pregnant,” she added. Jimmy, shocked, asked if she was serious, and yes, she was. Hayley explained that the production team had revisited that particular fight scene multiple times to make changes and add more fight sequences. And by the time they returned for the last round, she was about to pop. However, Hayley added that she didn’t back out and continued filming, even when the cast and crew kept offering her a stunt double. She continued, “And I have to say, I was taken such good care of. Everyone was so supportive, and they were like, ‘Oh, you can sit down, and we’ll have a stunt double do it.’ And I was like, ‘No! I’ve worked too hard. Let me do it.’ So I did it, and here it is.”Hayley first joined the Mission: Impossible franchise in 2023. At the time, her character Grace became a fan favourite, and critics also heaped praise, with demands for her to reprise the role in the next instal-

ment skyrocketing. Her character was introduced as a pickpocket who later becomes Ethan Hunt’s ally. Since then, her character has transformed into a full-blown IMF agent helping Ethan fight off a rogue AI that threatens to wipe out humanity. The franchise added a new batch of cast, including Angela Bassett, Nick Offerman, Hannah Waddingham, and Katy O’Brian, while older ones like Ving Rhames, Simon Pegg, Pom Klementieff, and Esai Morales reprised their roles.In a previous interview with Collider, Hayley opened up about the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity of working on the globally loved franchise alongside Cruise. The actor recalled how the Top Gun star kept her motivated throughout with encouraging words. When asked about her emotions on the last day of filming, Hayley said, “We filmed Grace’s first-ever introduction in the second film, so her first appearance in the movie is the last thing that I shot. I remember that day, Tom had said, ‘Movies are not something I do, it’s who I am.’” She added, “And I could see that. I saw that every day for five years. He lives it and breathes it and has devoted his life to it. So, to work with someone with that kind of work ethic is remarkable.” The actor was pressed on rumours suggesting she might be in a Marvel film, which she downplayed, jokingly calling the internet “a very reliable source.”Mission: Impossible – Final Reckoning touched the Rs 50 crore mark in India on May 23 ahead of its US release. The film opened to a massive Rs 16.5 crore business on the opening day. The film’s English version minted around Rs 34.05 crore, whereas its Hindi version made Rs 17.32 crore. Whereas in the US, the film earned Rs 68 crore (approx. \$8.3 million) in Thursday previews,

Diddy’s lawyer drops DNA twist during Kid Cudi’s testimony; music mogul silent on \$20,000 payment demand from Cassie’s mother



Sean ‘Diddy’ Combs, accused of sex trafficking, racketeering, and other serious sexual assault charges, is now heading into the third week of his trial in New York’s federal court. In the first two weeks, jurors heard from the rapper’s ex-girlfriend Cassandra Ventura, a federal prosecutor, rapper Kid Cudi, and some of Diddy’s former staff, including sex workers he allegedly hired for “freak-off” parties. So far, the court has recorded testimonies covering Combs’ 20 years in the music industry, including allegations of abusing women, and using his influence to commit illegal activities.

However, Diddy’s legal team, led by Marc Agnifilo, maintains that their client is not guilty. The case has brought up claims of Diddy holding onto “kompromat” (compromising videos he used to control people) and demanding \$20,000 from Cassie’s mother. Kid Cudi was also cross-examined on Diddy’s alleged involvement in the bombing of his Porsche in 2012. After Cassie detailed her brief romance with Kid Cudi, the rapper was subpoenaed in the case, where he confirmed his dating timeline, which clashed with singer’s relationship with Combs. Cudi insisted that at the time, he knew Cassie had broken up with Diddy due to problems in their relationship. However, shortly after, he revealed that the Bad Boy Record producer showed up at his home with his men and tried messing with his dogs in his absence.Days later, the rapper said his luxury Porsche was set on fire. Though he didn’t know who was behind it, he recalled a heated confrontation with Diddy, which led him to believe that Diddy was responsible for this. The police investigated, but Cudi said he never received any updates. During cross-examination, Diddy’s lawyer surprised Cudi by saying the police found female DNA on the Porsche, but Cudi claimed that he never heard about any DNA evidence.

In another big moment, Cassie’s mother, Regina Ventura, was ordered to take the stand to detail her daughter’s relationship with the disgraced music mogul. According to her, Diddy was furious when he found out about

Cassie’s affair with rapper Kid Cudi and demanded \$20,000 from her as payment for the money he had spent on Cassie’s music career through his record label, Bad Boy Records. Ventura said she had to take out a loan for her daughter’s safety. However, a few days later, Diddy returned the money with no explanation. Interestingly, Diddy’s lawyers didn’t ask Regina any questions during cross-examination, which was unusual since the defence grilled other witnesses for hours.Apart from that, Diddy’s former assistant, David James, detailed one incident where, after a party, Diddy was watching video recordings from the event and said he wanted to keep these videos safely in case he needed to use them later. The singer has been accused by federal prosecutors of possessing multiple compromising videos. Earlier, Cassie said Diddy threatened to release private videos of her, which could ruin her career. The same claim was repeated by Rodney “Lil Rod” Jones, who was Diddy’s videographer and lived with him for years.

Scarlett Johansson is open to direct Marvel film

Los Angeles: Hollywood star Scarlett Johansson says she would like to direct a Marvel film. Johansson recently made her directorial debut with “Eleanor the Great”, which had its world premiere at the Cannes Film Festival on May 20. It was screened under Un Certain Regard section.

The 40-year-old actor has featured in the Marvel Cinematic Universe films as Natasha Romanoff/Black Widow. Although the actor has no plans to reprise the character, when asked if she would like to direct an action film especially for the MCU, she said it “would be fun”.“I think the movies that I like that are big action movies also have the human connectivity piece. Even producing ‘Black Widow’ and being a part of the production of that, and the development of the story, and the story between Natasha and Yelena... (there is), I think, a way of doing it.“A way of maintaining the integrity of the idea of human connection, family, disappointment, all of the things that were themes in (Eleanor the Great), and doing it in a giant way in a giant universe, there are ways of doing that... So, yeah, definitely, it could be, it would be fun,” she told entertainment news outlet Deadline.“Eleanor the Great” stars veteran actor June Squibb alongside Chiwetel Ejiofor, Jessica Hecht, and Erin Kellyman. It is written by Tory Kamen and follows the story of a 94-year-old woman trying to rebuild her life after the death of her best friend. As a result, she moves back to New York City after living in Florida for decades.